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*a dead spot of light...*

## *Introduction*

And this would be number 20.

Anyway ... the plans for the next edition, number 21, will be a release date in December ... and before the holiday season.

An aspect that strikes me as difficult has to do with the large Internet sites that offer much music or rather work as a platform for bands to distribute their art. Take bandcamp for instance. It is a mess ... and especially so once you try to find something as simple as: noise music from Japan. Folk from Ireland. Tags are nice thing but without a proper search engine, it is futile to look for some obscure but possibly interesting bands. Larger groups profit from this, because you can search for their name, but small ones lack this chance and a lot is lost in the ever-increasing oblivion of the Internet; the same is also true of the Internet Archive ...

It is nice to have some sites, which create small spotlights on small bands and projects, like:

<http://freemusicarchive.org/>

<http://dogscanreadyourmind.blogspot.com/>

<http://freemetalalbums.wordpress.com/>

(active again)

<http://ribsout.blogspot.com/>

<http://calmintrees.blogspot.com/>

There are more of course ... somewhere ...

A good blog ceased to exist this year and it had a focus on free (non-metal) music. The FMA has been re-activated but is run under new management.

On the content of this edition:

Even though the Putsum interview is rather long, the one by Rostau (see edition number 13) would still be one with more pages. I wonder whether there will ever be a piece that would exceed it in length at some point in the future. Speaking of this Greek band, I never actually contacted them for an interview. Internet sites and newsletter lack some amount of precision now and then, especially when it comes to describing something as "black metal", which had been the case in terms of this project. An e-mail to the label remained unanswered, but the band got in touch with me at some point – I had been under the impression that it was the label that I am speaking to, which lead to some strange formulations in the questions -- sorry about that. Putsum is not a black metal band ... but they use some of the elements for their art, but the interview will reveal it all in an extensive kind of way.

The 20th edition of the magazine has also another novelty: an interview with a band from the southern part of Africa. No, not South Africa ... but from the Botswana. As some might know this country, the latter one that is, has some interesting bands to offer, like Wrust or Crackdust for instance – both play death metal. 'Amok' on the other hand would be a rather young band and they have released their first output not too long ago and plan to record another one soon. It is a bit difficult to get in touch with such small scenes and to get a glimpse into how the metal scene evolves in this part of Africa.

On non-metal stuff from Africa I would like to refer your attention towards this:

[http://freemusicarchive.org/label/Brother\\_Sister\\_Records/blog/Mobile\\_Rekodi\\_Situdio](http://freemusicarchive.org/label/Brother_Sister_Records/blog/Mobile_Rekodi_Situdio)

It is about a mobile recording studio in Kenya.

Speaking of development, another interview request led me astray as well. An attempt to get in touch with bands from Vietnam, resulted in a portrait of the scene – from the perspective of one label.

And ... this magazine contains two interviews with labels and not with bands: Shaytan Productions and Must Die Records. The latter one might be familiar to those, who have followed the last edition of this magazine.

It may be save to say that a lot of things did not turn out the way they were originally planned, but the end result is quite interesting I have to say.

Requests of interviews and reviews are generally possible ... I am always open to get in touch with new bands and artists. Also from non-metal genres.

And as I do not want to write this every time in every freaking interview:

I would like to thank every band and label for the promotion material, answers and so on. And thank you for the moral support and nice e-mails ... appreciated!

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All the best ...  
oneyoudontknow

edit:

*[note from the editor: I wanted to add the following to the previous edition, but had forgotten about it]*

The interview dealt with some other issues as normally, because a local Nepalese magazine already covered most of what I generally like to ask. So, give these two extensive and well conducted interviews done by the ktmROCKS a try:

- 1: <http://ktmrocks.com/site/interview-kalodin/>
- 2: <http://ktmrocks.com/site/interview-davin-shakya-kalodin/>



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## **Outlook**



## *A long opening interview:*

# Putsum

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

I am Katerina Greek Roma spiritualist... I can communicate with the dead and can see clearly the past and some aspects of the future for the person referred to as Putsum. Who actually Putsum is, is unimportant the important thing is what he is. Some people would say he is the Antichrist, or at least what the Antichrist represents. An anti-authoritarian power that wants to save the world from the coming Apocalypse and the eternal servitude to the invisible man named G.O.D. Putsum started preaching in the August of 2010 some time after his release from prison for the murder of his favorite puppet Hieronymus. His preaching is a mixture of urban pseudo-rituals and infernal noise.

**What does Putsum refer to? It has some vague reference to Burzum; at least your label explained as much to me.**

As I said Putsum started preaching in August 2010 but a few months before he had heard Det Som En Gang Var by Burzum and started being interested in the story behind the music. Vikernes killing Euronymus was somehow like a sacrifice for the Norwegian Black Metal scene to be known worldwide through the coverage and panic the media created. The spark that created Putsum was an incident in the local noise/free improvisation scene that reminded him of that dispute between Vikernes and Aarseth as well as some numerological elements. And since Burzum never performs live, Putsum performs in his place.

**How would you describe your music? I had a chance to listen to a good amount of your tracks and they are of a rather eclectic kind and cover some genres and styles. Why do you put such a large emphasis on experimentation?**

Putsum gives a lot of emphasis on low frequencies, he enjoys the trembling feeling that they create on someone's body it makes the music more experiential. Putsum's music is a patchwork of ideas and meanings transformed into sound. He develops his music in a way to support the main idea of the performance. Meaning that he first collects samples of sounds and other peoples music, soundscapes or performing, based on the connection these have with the theme of the performance and after he has collected them he makes a composition with all these diverse musical elements.

Putsum has been experimenting with music since he was 14, basically because he didn't have anyone to play music with (at the time he was playing bass guitar). Because he was bored of making covers of other peoples music the only thing he could do, was to beat up his bass guitar and use a dildo on the bass guitar's magnets for extra noise satisfaction. Since then he has been experimenting with other instruments and objects in order to have a broader musical vocabulary, experimenting is the continuous search to surpass himself and this applies also to the way his ceremonies are conducted.

**Can you lay out some of the history of your band? How did it develop over the years? How did it sound in the early days and has it changed since?**

Yes time has changed Putsum's performances... As I said the first Putsum ceremony was more made up to ridicule a specific situation and as a kind of parody for Burzum, actually Putsum didn't follow the path he is destined to take in the beginning, he always had something in his mind but it was not clear yet. Then something happened, one of his best friends, the closest thing he had to a brother was killed in a car accident. He was buried in the typical undertaking/church business as most people do nowadays. Of course since he was always disgusted by these vultures who make profit from the suffering of others, he wanted to do something better, something, more personal, not for his friend (he was dead, no point) but for him. He played live using a large car part as percussion, tapes and guitar feedback before performing a burial ritual on a terrace next to the cemetery where his friend was buried. That was the second part of a tetralogy which is based on the four elements (fire, earth, water, air) and their connection with death rituals. After that he saw the path he had to take, a few months later he performed a wedding ceremony marrying his friend Tamsūs Miškai and Giedre, and made two concerts concerning racism and homophobia in the Black Metal scene.

So there is always a mixture of ritual pseudo-religious ceremonies and things and ideas he wants to communicate. In May for instance he made a tour in Europe, most of the performances that he did had a reference to European history representing historical incidents from contemporary history and incidents or meanings concerning the Black Metal scene.

**Do you have an underlying philosophy or idea?**

The world is going to end on the 21st of December 2012 and fuck copyright and anyone who believes that the one who dies with the most is the winner of the game..

**Putsum is a one-man band, right? Do you feel comfortable with this? Might it be possible to see some additional musicians joining your rank in the future?**

Many have asked him to play together, and they have taken no answer... his path is a path of loneliness.



**I received some pictures of your live performances. You burned small scales churches, right? There were fireworks, burned dolls (?), a grill and many other strange things. Judging from the amount of fire that I see on the pictures you seem to be some sort of a pyromaniac, or? Why are fire and all these elements important when it comes to the live performance of Putsum?**

You are clearly referring to the first Putsum ceremony the one about Vikernes and Aarseth. On that ceremony the police and fire department came because they probably had many phone calls about a building burning. They came two or three hours after the gig had finished and everyone had left searching for the burning building (the gig was during the feast of the ASSumption of the Cursed Virgin and most people were away for vacations). They didn't find anything.

Well fire was necessary then, as most times is, for a Putsum show, like for instance the burning of cursed Cd-r covers along with a sympathetic dancing doll version of the person responsible for the curse. Putsum's main idea is to have a low budget, small scale show that has the maximum effect, usually fire does the trick, maybe because humans have embedded in their minds a fascination with fire and the importance that it had from prehistoric times. But fire is not the only element he has used, in August he finished the tetralogy about the elements and their association with death rituals.

An example being Putsum playing drums dressed as a caveman in front a piece of ice with a doll trapped in it and placed on a fake de-freezing processor, and all these inside a basement altered with sceneries to

resemble an icy cave. All these elements make the concerts more powerful, something that is remembered and its fun!

**Do you plan your performance beforehand or are most of the things you do on stage spontaneous? How does the music fit into this? Does it follow a strict interpretation?**

All of the performances except a few from the tour are planned, sometimes even months before the actual performance. But there are always a few setbacks during a Putsum show. Putsum in Greek sounds like saying "my dick" in a Greek redneck dialect, in Greek we use as slang the expression "ston poutso mou"= "to my dick" meaning "I don't care" but we also use it as "gia ton poutso" = "for the dick" meaning "it's crappy/bad. Putsum is just that crappy/bad, nothing actually works as it should be, sometimes the dolls don't work, or he forgets to do something (like switch on the green light before starting playing drums) or the walkman just happened to chew the tape.

As a one man show there are so many things he has to do, play music, change the lighting, turn on the fog machine, push the button for the dolls to move, press play for the tape to play while at the same time playing a riff on the guitar, that usually it is almost impossible to not make a mistake, especially since he never rehearses for his performances. The only thing he might rehearse is the music but that also depends on whether it is partly composed or a free improvisation, there are basic self-instructions during a performance like when the music goes like that do that and vice versa. But as I said there is always the element of surprise in his performances, which is one of his favorite elements because he never knows what will go bad. In the beginning was Chaos and Chaos was Nihil and Nihil was Chaos.

**What about lyrics and texts. Such can be found but they are generally audible. Do they have a meaning? Are there pre-arranged texts or do you express what comes to your mind at a certain time?**

The only lyrics Putsum has vocalized until now are simple words like Hirvi (meaning moose in Finnish) and the name of a song he made a cover of "New in Class" by Gay Anniversary, before killing his classmates and bombing the school. All the other "songs" are vowel choruses and gargles. But he is able to vocalize more through the use of tapes, like for instance the shouting or should I say shrieking of a woman in a public phone.

**How would you describe your performance? What can people expect to see at a concert of your band?**

Putsum performances are humorous and experiential, almost always attacking taboos and human stupidity, unless there is another concept behind the performance. Putsum has the power to transform himself, changing in front of your eyes to become the Master of the Wild Hunt, Countess Bathory, Vlad Tepes Dracula, Daedalus, King Tafur or any other historical or mythical figure he wants to be or just the schoolboy bombing his school. He has the power to alter his/your surroundings with just a click of some light switches, Putsum has the power to control the elements especially fire and can manipulate dolls to make his bidding. But most of all, Putsum can make your body tremble by sound.

**How many people tend to attend your concerts? Do you receive feedback from them in one way or another?**

In Greece there is a small following of people who believe in the power of Putsum, I would say they are about more or less around 40. The minimum he ever had was three during the tour, not counting the other bands, and maximum I guess around 70. Putsum makes his ceremonies only in small urban places, hidden usually underground or on terraces, if he ever was asked to play in a bigger place in front of a big audience he would refuse, he likes it with a few people, it's more personal. There is always laughter, this is usually the first feedback and lately the laughter is accompanied by cheers. There are times where people ask him what did he use to make that sound, where was that sample from, how did he make that costume, watch his self-made dolls. There are some people who take with them parts of the dolls he destroys or throws at the audience.

**Can you write a bit about your experiences on the tour which you did this year? Which countries did you visit and did the feedback or rather the reception differ among the locations and regions?**

First of all Putsum would like to thank Gay Anniversary and Bazooka (two of his favorite Geek bands) for asking him to come with them on the tour and Slovenly Records for arranging it. They were away for a whole month having 25 concerts, meaning they had a concert (almost) everyday, Putsum was what some people called "the Surprise Guy" because almost nobody from the places they went knew that there was a third band playing. Putsum was the roadie and usually he was playing as a guerilla band before Gay Anniversary after that he was making the lights for both bands. He played a total of 22 concerts some had a concept prepared with costumes, dolls etc. others were created during the long drives in the van while a few were improvised. All concepts were for a specific place, fortunately there were many places they went and so many different ideas.

They started touring in Italy and then Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Croatia the other guys went also to Serbia but Putsum stayed in Szolnok (Hungary) to make sure the local shaman was taking good care of a member of Bazooka who went to the hospital to have his appendix removed two hours before the show. His main concepts were "Bathory Bath", performed in Budapest, the story of the Blood Countess involving Barbie dolls in a blender with a contact microphone, Garglewraith a piece inspired by Gorgoroth's "Black Mass" in Krakow but played in Szolnok since the Krakow concert was cancelled "Rise of the Pigs" a piece in two parts performed in

Amsterdam and Berlin and "King Tafur" the knight from Normandy who after arriving in the HOLY lands during the first crusade became the leader of an army of ragged cannibals who massacred men, women and children just because they were Muslims, Jews and sometimes even Christians. The best reception he had was in Hungary, Switzerland and Naples. In Naples he made a reenactment of the destruction of Pompeii by Mount Vesuvius spitting cherry juice to the audience instead of lava. One gig he really enjoyed was a show in Hoorn (Netherlands) where he performed in the dirtiest toilet he found in Holland with the use of sound taken from the toilet's air handling unit and turning it into a monster, the piece was called "WCmoth" I think when it was finished most people thought it was just a really noisy soundcheck.

The worst was in Paris where he played "Wedding Crasher" which is about homophobia. It started with Putsum destroying a gay wedding cake, then doing some double dildo solo guitar and finally stripping naked while "Naked" by a Greek trash TV gay persona Ethnikos Star was being played. I don't know if they were just uninterested, annoyed, snob or offended but they were numb. The only feedback he got was some guy that asked him aggressively if he was a "tu-tu", if that means what I think it means, it is definitely not the brightest thing to ask someone after a gig about homophobia especially when there is a band called Gay Anniversary, also playing. I guess the audience was just too conservative to accept a guy with a mask stripping and throwing his "shit" stained panties to the audience.

**What about the black metal scene in general? Do they react to your kind of performance?**

Actually I have no idea, there are people who listen to Black Metal and attend his performances but Putsum has no ties to the local black metal scene. I would say it depends on the person.

**You have released four tracks so far. Why don't you share the background of these, because through this the readers would be able to get a better understanding of your band and the underlying conception.**

Masque of the Red Death

Was a noise ceremony in a basement in Thessaloniki during the day of "aNNUNCIATION", it could be said it was a ceremony for the elimination of "virgin" Mary's pregnancy. It is an improvised guitar piece that starts with small soft poundings on the guitar creating a low drone with some high frequency scarce feedback. As it progresses it becomes more noisy to escalate to chaos before being suddenly stopped. Actually one person puked during the concert probably because of the low frequencies. Putsum was dressed in a black cape lighting candles and burial incense before starting to play and there was a red skull projection on the wall behind him. Some people actually moved back some meters when he started lighting the candles. When Putsum stopped playing most people had already left the space.

Zombie Christ

Zombie Christ was performed two days before Greek-Orthodox eASTER. When he was in his teens, some guys he knew from school asked him to play bass guitar for a recording they wanted to make for their Death Metal band which I don't remember the name. After the recording the band was having fantasies of playing live in a stadium and having a performance with someone from the band dressed as a Roman soldier piercing the body of sweet jESUS. Putsum had found it ridiculous at the time but when all these visions about boring religious themed repetitions on TV, and boring family gatherings he changed his mind. This was the concert he always wanted to do. He made a ceremony that showed all the stages of jESUS cHRIST's ascension to stardom, in a distorted version of the religious propaganda and rituals and customs that are performed during the Greek-Orthodox holy week, Putsum used his powers to squeeze time and make it just in twenty minutes instead of a week.

Afro Black Metal

Putsum was asked to make an opening ceremony for Yuria Festival at Vinyl Microstore in Athens. Inspired by the festival's poster depicting two giraffes and a Black Metal phone prank he found in the internet he had this idea about racism in the Black Metal scene. During the European Tour it was performed live in Switzerland the day that the Neo-nazis got into the Greek parliament but the tape recording is from Yuria Festival.

It starts with a prerecorded tape of a low frequency pipe organ, after sacrificing an African sanguini grape fruit and drinking its juice from a horn he starts playing percussion and drums, with a guitar in front of the bass drum and a bass guitar under the floor tom, then a moving doll singer is placed on the table "stage", as a field recorded angry shrieking woman "singing" on a public phone in the streets of Thessaloniki is heard among the feedback inferno being released. The tempo changes to follow a looped sample from "Hello Africa", by Nigerian-born Swedish Dr. Alban, played slowly from a tape as Putsum places a self-made moving giraffe doll on "stage", and then faster, making Putsum get up wearing his party-shirt and start dancing as in a psychedelic dance party.

#### Societas Draconistrarum

During a time of "national saviors" (meaning the national unity Greek government formed in December 2011) and "German" propaganda which had an over-coverage by the Greek media, Putsum made a concert based on the life of Vlad Tepes Dracula. National hero of Romania, Vlad was also a victim of propaganda by merchants from Saxony that portrayed him as a bloodsucking beast. Putsum made this concert on the eve of the Greek independence day from the Ottoman Empire (in a mockery of school celebrations about the Greek independence) proving that Vlad was actually a vegetarian.

During this performance Putsum played samples from Dracula/vampire movies and TV series, Romanian propaganda movies from the late 70's and 80's, Dracula 8-bit and 16-bit computer games and a massacre song from the devastated lands. At the same time he was shaving his beard (with a electric shaving machine with an attached contact microphone) to be transformed into Vlad Tepes himself. The performance ended with Vlad impaling vegetables before being transformed into a Master Chef and cooking them in a barbecue. Making thus a connection of all these elements on the basis of how TV was used to help one of the so called "saviors" party get elected (since the woman presenting the show was the wife of a politician belonging then to the right disguised nationalist party LAOS, which is also comprised by TV-personas from the party leader's TV channel). It was about how TV shows and TV in general has been used as a disguised propaganda tool for politicians to get elected, something that continues to happen with the extremist Greek far-right party.

**Has all your music this focus on combining a visual performance with some kind of audio form? Do you think it can be enjoyed without it? How do you feel about spreading CDs, when the reference might not be available to everyone?**

There is music being recorded without having being used in a performance but these are yet unreleased. Experiencing Putsum performance is one thing, but Putsum gives a lot of focus on the music of his performances. His composed music is used as a guide for the performance so it is actually the base of what keeps the ceremony going. When something is to be audio-reproduced though, he gives a lot of emphasis to make the music have all the audible elements of his performances but in such a way as to be shorter than the actual performance and to be "better" composed than when played live. Being present while the music is playing has different time capacities than the recorded reproduced version. Putsum sees his reproduced music in CD or cassette forms purely as music.



**It would be interesting to know how you start and work on these concepts. Do you have a lot of ideas that are untouched and wait to be explored?**

I explained a bit on the four above tracks of how Putsum's mind works when he has an idea, many concepts are small windows to his past and obsessions he has. Some concepts are ready in his mind months before they actual happen, sometimes just because he is waiting for a specific date to present it.

The way these visions appear is purely chaotic and unexpected, for instance for the third part of the tetralogy about the elements and death, Hirvi, which was presented on the 21st of December 2011, one year before the end of the world. Putsum made this concept about a Finnish anthropologist, who had disappeared while searching for Sammi myths about the Wild Hunt, and was found trapped after a hundred years inside a piece of ice in a cave in Lapland. The anthropologist was found by a Norwegian occultist who went crazy from what he experienced and his touristic Sammi guide was missing. Then the story was mixed with cryogenetics and the temporal stasis of the dead in ice something like Walt Disney (an urban legend). This was presented in a video projection as a Finnish news report showing a video tape with a strange footage taped by the Norwegian occultist, after that Putsum appeared as the Sammi touristic guide playing drums to summon Hirvi (the horned god, Wild Hunt) before being possessed by him. All these started just because Putsum placed a touristic moose-headed pen from Finland on the neck of a 40cm head-less cupid statue. Then because he had this concept about using water, he chose to use a large block of ice, something he was usually making on the freezer when he was young and threw of the balcony to watch it brake. And then it was also his staying in Finland for a year, a place he has visited many times again ever since. All these combined, sparked the idea for this concept around six months before it was presented because the date was important for it. Putsum has one idea involving Jan Van Leiden the Anabaptist radical mystic-king of Munster an Apocalyptica style gig with cello and there is also the idea of a ceremony he is destined to make on the 21st of December 2012 to avert the aPOCALYPSE and eternal slavery.

**Your label provided me with some video clips and I would like to know whether they are online somewhere or available through your label?**

Unfortunately these videos are not available to the public yet, in case Putsum averts the aPOCALYPSE these will be spread to the world as the new scriptures. There are though parts of some ceremonies, that evaded gODS censorship in you tube, these were recorded by people from the audience.

**It is a curious thing that you wear a mask in the colours black and white. You do not like corpse paint do you? Is it easier for you to play the role of a "black metal" artist this way? The bunny ears made me chuckle a bit.**

In the beginning Putsum wore no mask until he found it in Yusurum, a bazaar in Athens where people sell things found in the garbage. But this mask is actually one of the relics was given to explorer John Rae in 1854 by an Inuit shaman. It is a vessel for emotions created during a Putsum performance and yes it is more convenient than corpse paint. Changing faces is a part of a Putsum performance and the mask helps, it is also easier for him to concentrate to his multiple tasks. As for the bunny ears, they are actually xmas cotton reindeer horns with bells attached on them, they were the horns of the Horned God Hirvi (Leader of the Wild Hunt).

**How do you see the metal scene or the black metal scene in particular? Is it necessary to demystify the underlying premises and 'ideologies'?**

The truth is that Putsum was never a metal fan, most things he knows are mainstream metal bands. It is partly a parody of the male bad ass image that most metal bands project. But it is not just about that, the thing is that there are metal bands that through music propagate fascist ideologies, and like the TV fascists mentioned earlier they too pass their hate messages. Putsum attacks these ideologies and all those who support them (media, school propaganda, stupidity) with humor, through a détournement of the Black Metal scene. But he also uses Black Metal as a musical form inspiration.

**Do you see black metal as a kind of music that is stuck in a closet and refuses to deal with reality, while mystical and religious aspects are far overblown in their perception or impact in the underlying ideology of the scene?**

Music is not the problem but as I said it's the attitude. It's that attitude that I have heard in a Greek Metal documentary "Either you are Metal or not". It's more I think about belonging somewhere, belonging to a subculture that distinguishes you from the others. It's like being a hipster and wear glasses when you don't need to, it's just happens that instead of glasses you wear leather armbands, sacrifice animals, pray to Satan or Mr.Pagan etc.

**You do not only deconstruct the metal scene but also, judging from the videos, deal with media in general. Do you feel it is necessary to destroy the messages of the mainstream media these days? Is this a form of liberation or of defeatism?**

First of all Putsum doesn't have a TV in his cave and this way it becomes even clearer what the media are trying to do. For instance in late March he happened to watch the news in Greece, every channels had excessive reports about (against) immigrants, when he returned from the tour in June, the far-right party had been elected and there were everyday reports of neo-Nazis attacking immigrants, the attacks still continue but the media don't mention it anymore unless if it is fatal. There was also an incident where a politician of that party attacked another politician of another that happened to belong to the Greek Communist party and was a woman and the media were all over this. The thing is that bad publicity is good publicity and that's what happened, the neo-Nazi party had the same votes after a month in the second elections which showed that they had now a following and not just reaction votes. It is a matter of awareness.

**How do you see the use of arcane or magick symbols?**

They are really pretty.

**When it comes to your own musical background, then what kind of music do you generally listen to?**

He grew up with mainstream punk rock and post-punk, then for sometime he was a Goth-kid but always listened to other types of music. His father is obsessed with classical music playing it really loud in the house, probably these are two of the reasons why he likes to play loud and noisy. Putsum listens to experimental music usually drones, post-punk and punk, bands like Sunn(((O))), Six Organs of Admittance, Current 93, and some of his favourite records include "Hearing Solar Winds" by The Harmonic Choir/David Hykes "Ummagumma" by Pink Floyd and "Blood Saints" by Sujo. His currently favourite is Phurpa. His performances are influenced by the Residents and Massaccesi.

**How is the situation in Greece right now? Sadly, the mainstream media in Germany limits their coverage to vile propaganda, while the situation on the ground is generally ignored. There a few sites and magazines that try to bring other views on the matter, but these are rather in a niche and do not reach that many people.**

Do you expect to see an increase in radicalisation in the arts and in the music? Will there be a backlash due to the extreme measures that your country has to suffer; thanks to the IMF and the troika? As you said the "German" media use vile propaganda, which is used by the "Greek" media for their own vile propaganda, the thing is to see what is hidden behind this charade. The number of homeless people and people who can't even afford food for themselves or their families increases. Most people who have work are being extorted to have lower salaries, while at the same time the prices don't go down. Yes there is corruption in Greece (as is everywhere) and unemployment and these were the basic reasons for the riots in December 2008 in Greece. It's not that the youth didn't try to avert what is going on now it is that they failed, the system won. But since then there have been some minor changes, a sense of solidarity and collaboration in the arts and not only new stages being from occupied theaters to non-profit spaces for gigs. I believe in the near future there will be more changes, also social. Unfortunately for now the only social changes are that the far-right extremists have gained a lot of power which is scary, especially in a country that has a lot of enmity between right and left due to the Greek Civil War (after World War II), a war that has been "erased" from mass memory and its remnants supposedly died before the 80s' but it's still there, waiting to resurface.

**Can art help to understand and deal with this situation?**

Some advocates of art believe that art can change things Putsum is not one of them. What he does is clearly existential and a way to deal with the situation in a personal level. If other people find some comfort or meaning from what he does is clearly coincidental. Art helps when it brings people together, opens someone's mind and gives some kind of satisfaction to the observer/participant/listener.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases / concerts? What are the plans for the future?**

There is a chance that he will visit the "Holy Lands" in Fall something that will be reminiscent to the Crusades although more catastrophic, as well as some performances in Athens... He has also channeled some of his powers to create an LP called "Hirvi", these infernal energies must be released on the 21 of December 2012 to avert the aPOCALYPSE.

as for the future it is close.



**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**  
[www.phasejunk.com](http://www.phasejunk.com)

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

Putsum has a fan uploading photos from his performances and some music  
[www.myspace.com/michailadamis](http://www.myspace.com/michailadamis)  
and then there is also [phasemag.blogspot.gr/](http://phasemag.blogspot.gr/) and [www.noise-below.org/](http://www.noise-below.org/)

**Some closing comments if you like**  
Repent!

## *Interviews*

# *Amok*

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

Amok was formed by Odirile Dux Ditshupo on 19 July 2005. The Interview is conducted by Dux. Amok is a 4 piece band, Band leader Dux on guitar and lead vocals, Siska-guitars, Cosmos-drums and Skull-Bass. There have been changes n membership n guitar and bass over the years. Genre is Afro Heavy metal. The band has recorded a single titled Marocko, vernacular for rockers.

**Botswana is not a country that is often on the radar of the metal community and it would be nice if you could describe the metal and the 'normal' music scene a bit. What status does metal have in your country?**

There are many rock lovers in Botswana only that misconceptions, myths and isms related to the music. You know most people Rock is satanic and this breeds resistance. There are different kinds of music here, borankana, kwaito, hip-hop, jazz, blues, gospel e.t.c. Only dat people this days are obsessed with spinning disks. I think is economic to the stakeholders, or we whether real artists are endangered species. Metal, Rock and other genres doing live music are struggling. As for Metal the scene is growing because of persistence from bands and metal lovers.

**What made you start Amok and what had been your reasons for playing heavy metal? On your homepage you name some influences – Iron Maiden, Manowar, Wasp, Scorpions – and it would be interesting to know how you got in touch with their music. Is it possible to buy their music in stores? Is metal played on the radio/television?**

Amok was started because personally i think there was something missing, melodic band, serious singing than growling or talking. We wanted to close that gap. Bands like Scorpions, Wasp, Iron Maiden, Hammerfall are melodic and your ear and heart cant resist the power behind their music. Heavy Metal rules, we chose it or it chose us. I grew up listening to rock, thrash, hard rock but heavy metal rules and we love this.

**When it comes to forming a band, how difficult had it been to find proper musicians? Has this changed over the years? Are there collaborations with other metal or rock bands; in the sense that the band help each other?**

Very difficult to find serious, dedicated and talented musicians you keep serching an ultimately you find or they find you. There are many bans in Botswana and more are still being formed. Some Bands do collaborations but we are still committed to building Amok and the future might bring collaborations, welcome. otherwise we are very open to sharing stage with any band local or international.

**African folk music meets metal ... do you think this could work?**

Music is art and everything is possible.



**Can you write a bit about other metal bands from your country? Do you have some favourite releases in this respect?**

There are many bands, Crackdust, Wrust, Remuda, Dust N Fire, Nodd, Evergreen, Metal Orison, Nosey Road, Skinflint, Overthrust, Stane e.t. c. I love Dented Reality album by Crackdust, Souless machine by Wrust, Mantainers of Brutality by Stane, Metal Orison album Mayopic Enslavement.

**Amok would be the name of your band. Why did you pick it?**

We had a list but Amok suits our style of play. Most of our songs start with slow tempo and suddenly we run Amok. We know there are other Amok bands but we are the real Amok.

**Why did you pick the title Marocko?**

Marocko is an Anthem for rock lovers in Botswana. It's about them (Rockers), they feel proud and special esp in live gig when we perform the song and so do we.

**What do your lyrics deal with?**

Life is a big package. The challenges we face in life, politics, love, war, diseases and our philosophical stand for metal that is good

**How did the fans react to your music?**

Well it's a small population but they love it. There is always a critic, they shall surrender soon.

**It seems you have played live already. Can you write a bit about your experiences in this regard? Do you play cover versions on stage? How large have been the crowds?**

We have played in gigs and the crowd is good most of the time. 200 to 500 unless in shows like Fete de la musique where attendance can be up to 2000. Gigs are a challenge esp funding, venues, sound and lighting but metal shall conquer and prevail.

**According to your homepage you have recorded an album called 'Running Wild' in March 2012. Will it be released soon? How does the music on it differ from Marocko?**

Correction, we suppose to have recorded running wild but not yet. We are working on recording it soon.

**Your favourite booze?**

Tea total. Blak and strong enough to float a gun

**Should someone visit your country, then what dishes should this person try? Does your cuisine offer food with a good amount of chili as well?**

We'll try papa, meali-meal with seswaa (beef), dikgobe. There is a lot of pherehere here (chilli stuff).

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

We are selling locally in shops like Kgalagadi music, Rokas unfortunately we do not have online sales but we shall in due course.

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

Check, [www.amok.yolasite.com](http://www.amok.yolasite.com), search amok on facebook, [amokianlord@yahoo.com](mailto:amokianlord@yahoo.com) and [ditshupodux@yahoo.com](mailto:ditshupodux@yahoo.com)

**Some closing comments if you like.**

We are interested in touring the world, leaving a legacy like the so called big metal bands. It is something impossible here but we gonna make it possible.

Thanks a lots.

# Vagina Wolf

**Q: Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

A: I, Johan (also JSH and founder/owner of Ominous Recordings who released Stillheten that you interviewed in the previous issue), started Vagina Wolf in 2010.

**Q: Are you alone in this band or are other members involved in it as well?**

A: I have a drummer as well, PKT, and I do the guitar/vocals.

**Q: What would be the meaning behind the band name?**

A: I could be all pretentious and come up with something that could come off as deep, but the name just surfaced during a conversation with a friend regarding bandnames, femininity and wordplay. I had just finished a course in literary science, where I had read some Virginia Woolf, I like wordplay and like writing lyrics from different perspectives.

**Q: In an e-mail to me you wrote:**

*"I started Vagina Wolf in the spring of 2010, I wanted to play atonal, dissonant and disharmonic music with a punk drive and attitude, harsh, noisy and weird."*

**Why? What are the, let us call it, benefits of this type of music compared to ordinary one? What do you try to express through it?**

A: Why? It's the music I like to listen to. I want music to be more than background noise or something to tap your foot to, I want it to grab you, hit you from behind, mess with your head or inspire you, make you feel something. When I decided to start this kind of band, I had been listening a lot to The Birthday Party, early No Wave Stuff (Teenage Jesus and The Jerks, DNA, Mars) as well as Lake Of Dracula, Die Monitr Batss, Jaks, Arab on Radar, french bands like A.H.Kraken and Sida and Oxbow.

What I'm trying to express is myself, in any way I can, which is the only benefit and it's for my own benefit. There aren't any benefits in this kind of music, because there is no other reason to play then to feel that you have to do this. There's no money and no fame, unless you compromise and add pop-sensibility to it, you die, do a shitload of drugs and fuck shit up, or something else that has nothing to do with the actual music.

**Q: What bands and albums can you name as sources for inspiration in this respect?**

A: The whole mentality of the No Wave scene has been a big inspiration, as well as dadistic poetry, the punk "fuck-you"-approach towards everything. Name dropping something atonal, noisy and harsh with a punk drive I would say White Suns - Waking In The Reservoir, The Birthday Party - JunkYard or Die Monitr Batss - Youth Controllers. There are too many to mention, but these three are amazing albums.

**Q: How would you define term disharmonic? What are the core aspects of it?**

A: Well, for me it's that it's not clean and harmonic, I like two notes that just tear at each other. Like tuning your guitar and the string your tuning isn't in harmony with "control note" or what to call it. To play notes together that aren't in harmony with each other but create that broken, out-of-tune sound.

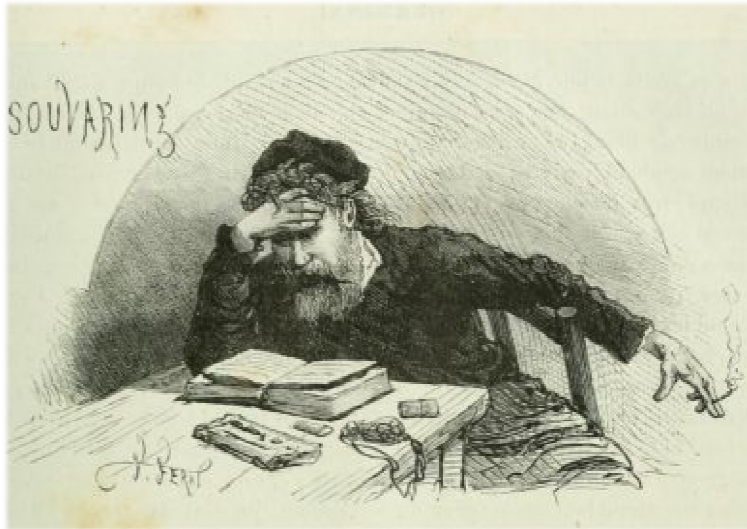
**Q: What bands and albums can you name as sources for inspiration in this respect?**

A: Well, DNA, Mars and Teenage Jesus and The Jerks seems disharmonic enough to mention here.

**Q: In terms of creating music that would stand up the terms brought up by you in the e-mail, how do you approach this aspect? Is there a starting point?**

A: I usually get ideas that I try to play on the guitar, coming up with a rhythm or a "riff", get influenced by a structure in someone else's song and make an interpretation of that, which usually never sounds anything near what I had thought, but sounds good anyway.

What I did, to get away from the thinking of writing "cool riffs" was to just mess with the guitar tuning. So I'm not able to play anything normal or harmonic, while playing like a regular punk guitarist.



**Q: What role do facets like contrasts, noisiness, intensity, chaos, counterpoints, layers and offensiveness play in terms your music?**

A: A huge role, we are very interested in dynamics, the contrast between chaos and control, beauty and filth, slow and intense, noise and music, as well as the point of separation between them.

**Q: When crafting it do you prefer something that has come naturally and therefore somewhat intuitively, or do you feel more comfortable when time and effort has brought it to a**

**more planned and organized state?**

A: A combination of both I'd say. I love to listen to improv music, but I prefer to play songs that has a structure, or at in this band. I'm open to collaboration with other bands and to improv jams, which we have done with other bands we know, nothing released, but performed live and some recorded.

**Q: Following this question in some respect: what makes an idea part of your release? Do you scrap a lot of them or is everything preserved either for this one band or another project?**

A: I don't play guitar in any other band, so things are either used or discarded, if it's not good enough for this band, I won't use it anywhere else either. If it's good idea for this band, I might try and make an interpretation of it with my solostuff or the other way around. I did a live cover of one the recorded Vagina Wolf tracks in march when I had a solo performance with my noise project JSH. It fit, and that's probably because my solo stuff aren't that far, theoretically, from what I do with PKT in Vagina Wolf.

It's more or less the same with lyrics, I re-use lyrics I have written for earlier bands or projects that never was recorded/released. I also translate parts of poetry I've published and use as song lyrics. My opinion is that since I have written everything, I can use it however I want.

**Q: What does the track "Religious Noir and Sex (pt. I-III)" deal with? There is an extensive vocal performance, but broken into several parts. Has this been an improvisation or did you use a pre-written text? How does the title fit into this?**

A: It deals with a lot. The biblical, christian view of women, how sex was turned into something filthy and sinful, women in league with the devil, helplessness before temptation, lust, desire, self-loathing and self-destructiveness.

I always write lyrics, I always have lyrics, then If I have a lyrical idea and it doesn't fit the song, I rewrite it to fit the structure, or rewrite it completely if it's not good enough.

Since I have been writing for longer and more extensively than I've been a singer in a band, the lyrics are extremely important to me.

**Q: On vimeo a small piano piece can be found, which offers a curious juxtaposition of calm minimalist melodies and intense piano noise. Are these two minutes representative for the entire composition? Why do you feel such extreme contrasts are necessary? Can the noise part have melodies as well?**

A: As said earlier, we like contrasts, and extremes. And noise can/does always have melodies, you just need to listen, you can find rhythm or melodies in noise. If there really there or not, that's irrelevant. The piano piece is pretty representative for that particular song, but not the rest. It's a lot of ideas, inspiration and influences that's been crammed into those four songs we recorded.

**Q: Do you have some forthcoming releases? What are the plans for the future?**

A: At the moment PKT is in Norway, and has been since December last year. When he gets back to Stockholm, we're gonna get the songs mixed, released and then start to create new music. I also want us to start playing live, which is something I really miss doing. I've always viewed a live performance as something pretty cathartic.

**Q: In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

A: Through Ominous Recordings [www.ominousrecordings.com](http://www.ominousrecordings.com) you can buy the 3-way split tape Vagina Wolf did with Soviet Jazz and Totenpaahle. There you have the track Religious Noir & Sex in all it's glory.

**Q: How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

A: The Ominous website [www.ominousrecordings.com](http://www.ominousrecordings.com) or find Ominous on facebook, also have a soundcloud, music/poetry-blogs connected to the label and a myspace that's out of use.

**Q: Some closing comments?**

A: Check out every artist, album and site I've mentioned! It's worth it.

## Vietnamese Metal Scene

**Even though this is not an interview in the ordinary sense, it might be best if you introduce yourself a bit. Who are you and what would be your part of the Vietnamese metal scene?**

I'm Trung, the owner of Bloody Chunks Records and 676 Studio. I do record for metal bands in Ho Chi Minh city, organize the gigs around the city and playing guitar for Disgusted, death metal ; Rot, black metal ; and do vocal on Wu, a grindcore band.

**Even though the Metal Archives are limited in their scope in which they cover the hard rock genre, at least in metal they offer some interesting insights into the development of the particular scenes. In terms of Vietnam the year 1995 is marked as the first entry, Steel Owl's Hay Nhin Xuong Chan release. The MA entry carries in the information that it had only been spread in the USA. Is this band even known in your country? Did you ever had a chance to listen to this release?**

These guys from Steel Owl lived in Vietnam then moved to USA earlier in the 90's. This band sure is well-known in my country. I myself got the copy of their album in 2000. They look like Skid Row to my eyes at that time. The music is hard rock influenced, and it sounds good to me. Most of the songs wrote by some "underground" artist here, about war and love in a very different way compare to the other songs at the time it's been released.

**Bức Tường would be the second band to release something in the metal style and have done so until the year 2006 in which they called it quits. They reformed in 2010 but changed to a rockish style. Can you write a bit about this band their impact in terms of the metal scene. What kind of music did they play?**

This band have nothing to do with metal genres. They very popular here. But I think their role in this game is success only with the following of the "mainstream" audiences. Lots of guys turned to be a rockfan or something like that cause of this band's music. But if you ask me about the influence in true metal music here. I would say NO. They play soft rock/hard rock like Bon Jovi and some glam/hair influenced. The lyrics is very mainstream, no bad words, and full of "lessons in life". And that's why, most of extreme metal guys here hate them very much.

**Can you lay out the further evolution of the Vietnamese scene? What bands played a role and what would be their status today?**

The story of metal here actually began with ATMOSPHERE, back to 2003, they released a demo with 6 songs, played thrash metal. I myself formed ROT that year too, play raw black. And in Saigon, some guys created a band called CANCELED, play death metal, the first step in the genre. Another aggressive band is POLAR LOST, playing death'n'roll.

Some bands like UNLIMITED join the game with demo songs sound like Cradle Of Filth but then quickly left the scene, and join the mainstream river with Power/symphonic metal materials. GOD FATHER formed as a heavy/thrash metal change their music to melodic/thrash/death metal and got some positive views from the crowds. In 2006, there's END OF ROAD, playing melodic death metal. 1 year later, DISGUSTED appear to be the only death metal and extreme metal band left. 2011, we welcome the birth of WUU, a weirdo grindcore freak. Beside that, lots of young guys with metalcore/melodic stuff formed bands like MULTIPLEX, DEADLINE, CO-EXIST, SEISMIC ORIGIN.....

**When it comes to genres, then which can be found these days and how well are they received?**

Vietnam nowadays still have a negative views with extreme genres like death, black, grindcore....But with metalcore, the crowd seems growing bigger day by day. And alternative/nu metal get a lots of fans following. The trend is turning to some gay stuff like post hardcore, screamo.....But we still got like thousand fans of death metal left. The media like to focus on fabulous guys playing metal without attitude and ignore the existence of extreme metal bands.....

**How do you see the Vietnamese compared with other ones from the region? What are the differences compared with Thailand, China, Malaysia or Singapore?**

A lots ! First about politicians. The government don't like USA's trends like metal, that's why doing gig and inviting metal bands here is hard like hell. Beside that, police always take a look on us, we cant do gig often like the other country in our area. But I think in the next few years we'll have enough power to do some metal festival with headliner from Europe or USA....

**Why did it take so long to really get the metal thing started? Other scenes were active much earlier.**

This's about history. After war, lots of thing changed. If you do some research, metal music and long hair guys is forbidden back to 80's. We got a big scene back to 68-69, rock'n'roll, hard rock, psychedelic....But then, everything changed with the chaging of politicians too. That's why we are slower than the other country and having a very weird metal scene here.....

**From a broader perspective, what is the status of metal and hard rock in your country anyway?**

Mainstream metal and rock stuff will become big next 5 years. But extreme metal ? Nobody help, we need to do ourself, so it hard to tell about the underground scene here....

**How does the society react to the metal scene? Has this changed over the years? Is it common to see someone walk the streets with a metal shirt?**

Yes, the look changing, slow but its acceptable. You can do whatever you want, tattoo, long hair, black shirts....Just don't making troubles.

**How the media deal with this rather heavy kind of music? Do you have radio shows or even music shows on television?**

I don't watch TV myself. So I don't know.....Since I saw lots of shit on Music shows, I stopped watching TV for 5 years now. All I watch is Discovery channel.

**What about concerts and such? In what frequency do they take place and what kind of metal is offered there? Do you have some larger festivals in Vietnam?**

We had 2 big festivals, but now they stopped doing big gig. So we back to the small bars and do gig with local extreme metal bands here every months. About altnerive metal and mainstream stuff, you can go to bars everynight for bands like that.

**What about metal magazines, diy-culture, tape trading and bootlegging? Did any of these ever played or still play a role in your country?**

Some guys did metal megazines, but they failed 3 years ago. Tape trading ? No ! Kids nowadays stay in their room and downloading shits...Back to 95-2003. Buying, trading CDs, Tapes is the main way to reach the metal music. But now, that died.

**Are there differences between the local scenes in the towns? Sài Gòn and Hà Nội? Is there a contrast between the north and the south of Vietnam?**

It sure have the differences. Sai Gon play music in a more violent way than Ha Noi guys. In Ha Noi, they love some kind of emotional music, even that's is metal or rock. You can image like this : Saigon listen to Blink 182, Hanoi listen to Coldplay. Saigon listen to Cannibal Corpse, Hanoi listen to Children Of Bodom.....I didn't say about all of them, but most of the fans from the north and south, they got differences like that...

**Are there bands, whose music is a combination between traditional concepts and modern ones? Do you think such a thing could work?**

We still in the learning time, so I don't think combination is good. Few guys tried, but it sound terrible and doesn't make sense at all. Just one track, called Tragedy Of Ratanasist by S.Y.G, that's the only song I think have something to be heard...But S.Y.G stopped and they now living in USA, so sad.

**From what I have seen at the Metal Archives a lot of bands sing in their native tongue, while English does not play such a role. Is this still the case or is there a shift towards the lingua franca? Can you describe the difference in the sound between a song sung in Vietnamese and in English? Does your language have a special touch and vibe?**

Yes, Vietnamese language sound sexier with metal ballads song and alternative stuff, and in fact, if you want get famous and get money here, you need to write the song in Vietnamese language. But in extreme scene, that's not a big deal, people screaming English mostly...

**What are the topics bands tend to deal with in their lyrics?**

Lots about the society and things that pushed our music taste down. Vietnam is still not completely open minded. That's why the bands feel being abandoned from the big mother of metal scene. You can see that. And some write about bad things happen in their life in a view of violence like Disgusted, Polar Lost,....Some about horror and weird stuff like Rot, Wuu....Some like to say it out loud in ironical words like Atmosphere.

**In an e-mail you told me that you manage some bands in Vietnam. Which would these be and what kind of music do they play? You also run a label don't you?**

I help Disgusted, Rot, Wuu, Polar Lost, Omerta, Deadline, Co-exist....record, do the gigs. They all play Death,black,metalcore music. Im trying to make thing bigger. Vietnam still didn't have any real record labels for metal yet.But I'll do it soon this year.All the work I did before is unofficial.

**What albums of Vietnamese metal can you recommend?**

Omerta – Beginning Of The End, Disgusted – Thorns Over The God's Crown, Wuu – 888, End Of Road – Cung Duong, Atmosphere – Mat Xich,.....

**Can you recommend Internet sites, which can be used as a starting point for diving into the Vietnamese music/metal scene? What labels and such?**

<http://www.facebook.com/xmetalgroup>

<http://hehemetal.com/>

**Some closing comments if you like**

Stay true and keep the faith.



# Shaytan Productions

**Why don't you start off the interview with presenting the person/s, whose duty it is to answer these questions. What role do you play in terms of the label and are there other persons involved in it as well?**

There is only one person involved and that is me, Shahid. I finance the releases myself and make them available. The releases I have put out represent my own taste of music, although I have a broader range of interest - I decided to make the label focus on just one part of it, middle eastern (oriental) black metal.

**Let us start with some basic ones:**

**Could you explain to the readers the background of the name of your label. What made you pick it? In what language is it actually?**

Shaytan Productions is Arabic. However it applies to all Muslims as "satan" because this is the word usage for it based from the Quran. Shaytan also is the equivalent word for evil. Shaytan thus represented the

majority of the East - and for me this "East" was what my focus was. This "black metal" genre would most likely defined as "satanic" in the East and for that reason - the label name was chosen. Not because the label promotes satanism or believes in satan, but rather that it represents "black metal" in the east as it would be defined there.

Why and when did you start this label after all?

What is the motivation behind it? Is there even some kind of

philosophy apparent, which finds and has found its manifestation through the releases?

This label began in 2008 and it was begun with the purpose of promoting middle eastern black metal exclusively as there didn't seem to be anyone exclusively dedicated to this genre. For the most part luck played its toll that I had found Al-Namrood from Saudi Arabia defining the label entirely to what I had sought. Followed by Dhul Qarnayn from Bahrain, and now The Horn from Australia whose aim is to put the Egyptian Book of the Dead into musical expression.



**In terms of the music, then what kind of concepts and style can be found on your label? Are you open to all kinds of music or do you keep it narrowed to a specific kind of it? What genres have been covered by your label so far? Do you think such is an important aspect of a label?**

Although my interest lies in various forms of music, defined by my favorite bands outside my label Virgin Black, Elend, Slagmaur - my label is focused purely on the middle eastern forms of black metal expression. So far I have covered doom metal (The Horn), dark ambient (Dhul Qarnayn), black metal (Al-Namrood), and avantgarde (Kalki Avatara). None of these bands would be exclusively outside of black metal though and most where in that vein. The Horn would be considered black metal more than doom metal. Dhul Qarnayn made a special one time ambient release but was a black metal project. Kalki Avatara from Malfeitor and Aborym becomes apparent was a side-project of a predominantly black metal influenced mindset. Al-Namrood represent the label entirely - black metal with orientalism.

**Can you present some of the bands that have appeared on your label so far?**

The Horn, Kalki Avatara, Dhul Qarnayn, and most prominently and well known Al-Namrood from Saudi Arabia.

**How do artworks and music play together? Do you collaborate with artists that create them for you? Or do bands approach you with a ready-made concept that merely needs to be printed and distributed? Diy, hand-made or professional, what would be your opinion on these three concepts?**

When I began the label I assisted the bands in their design and concept as you can see from the initial releases on my label. Al-Namrood being the band that the label is representing through for 4 years now, has progressed to create their own image now. It was lacking in that professional feel for that reason, but they have since managed to change their image by using professionalism in their approach to concepts and design.

**How would you describe your own cultural environment. How does your label fit into this? Do you support bands from your region?**

I'm from Canada, and I have had no Canadian bands on my label. Outside of Quebec, Toronto doesn't cater many black metal bands.

**When it comes to formats, then what can be found on your label? Can you explain for picking some and leaving out others? Do you prefer analogue over digital?**

I am not a huge fan of the digital era, I prefer the CD's because of their accompanying artwork - and their overall physical nature to represent the entire full scale of art piece. I release only professional CDs, and the music is available in digital though. I would be interested in doing vinyls, but Canada lacks the support to do it, so I refrain from it.

**Is it important for you to not only having a well crafting design, but also a booklet with all the lyrics and the information on the release?**

This is dependent on the band that is putting their work out. However I always mention to be minimal is the best - since the less you know, the more that is left up for imagination.

**What about special/limited editions? What would be your opinion on these? Do you sell such or do you plan to do so?**

I have finally made a limited edition special engraved box release, and it will feature Al-Namrood's initial tracks remastered and perfected housed in a box engraved with their logo on the box with a postcard for artwork.

**Is it necessary that the music on your label reflects in some respect also your own preferences or would it be possible for you to spread something that you appreciate for its own merit, even though it might be difficult for you to listen to or enjoying it?**

I only release what I prefer, it would be difficult to endorse something I didn't and justify financing it.

**How do you deal with reviews and interviews? Do you send physical copies to writers and magazines or do you prefer to deal with MP3 stuff for this kind of matter? Do you think these written works still play a role in an age of the omnipresence of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter?**

I still deal with the original method of sending physical CD's, and I post each review whether good or bad on our website so the listener or reader can make up their own mind. Also in appreciation of the writers and websites/magazines time and effort I link back to them to spread the word. None of my bands or I myself have Twitter, or Facebook. They're are fan pages that exist but are not endorsed by or affiliated with Shaytan Productions or Al-Namrood.

**When it comes to criticism and negative reviews, then how do you deal with this aspect? Do you pass such stuff on to the bands? Do you respond to the person that confronts you with them? Is it even possible to find them on your homepage? What is an honest review from your point of view?**

Every one will have their own opinion on the music. It just so happens each reviewer will have a predetermined interest in the music I put out thus will judge based on that preconceived notion. I post each review up whether positive or negative and I do not confront negative reviews, its an opinion of the writer - that's all it is. It's one single person out of the many that may not have liked it.



Even if the majority disliked it, the fact the the band have made it, and I liked it is enough to warrant me distributing it. I don't believe in objectivity in reviews, so there can't be an honest review, it will always be the opinion of the writer.

**Is it easy for you to reach out to fans and sell your outputs?**

Al-Namrood have a following at this point, they where our first band and it was difficult to be accepted at first for the band and label. Since then everything has eased and the label and bands on it have enjoyed at least some form of following.

**Do you distribute all the music by yourself or do you collaborate with other labels or distros in this respect?**

I collaborate with other labels and distros - also keep up to date that way on what others are doing and hearing new bands and music styles all the time. There are no limits to who I work with - as long as the mutual support is there in the underground dark genres.

**How do you see the aspect of downloads and tendency to 'piracy' music? Do you feel or are bothered by this sting?**

I use to be, but I have grown to accept it. Those that want it, will buy it and support the band. While those that wanted it without paying, will find means to get it without paying. Piracy indirectly does lead to more exposure which can mean more fans for the band. The label's intention was never to profit but instead keep it self-sufficient.

**How can bands submit music to your label? What steps are necessary for this?**

I take the effort to locate and pick my own bands since only I can know what I prefer. Although I may overlook a band by not searching enough so I will accept myspace links to listen to their music or take their downloads if they contact me with a proposal.

**And now to something more specific and different:**

How do you see the metal scene in the Middle East? As your label as a certain focus on it, it seems natural to ask about this aspect, doesn't it?

Its growing for sure. I am seeing and hearing a lot of black metal projects appear everywhere in the middle east now.

**Do you accept music from this region no matter what, or do you have a certain focus on a couple of scenes. What would be your reasons for picking the bands you did?**

I did not go by concept or their region, I went by their musical expression and if I enjoyed their music or not. I choose on a very surface level what is appealing to me.

**You write on your homepage: releasing exclusively oriental black metal, and oriental dark ambient. Why do you have these focusses? How would you describe the differences towards other scenes?**

I found it more suiting to focus on this as there was no one dedicated to this. As mentioned, my tastes in music vary greatly outside of the oriental sphere of black metal.

**Do you see an establishment of a hybrid between metal and Middle Eastern folks music already? Or do you think such will be established in the future?**

I think just as folk music (viking metal etc) exist for the west, it will catch on that it will become something separate from black metal entirely. It would be interesting to see that happen and I would support it, as eastern influence is highly lacking in black metal especially.

**How do you deal with the rise of Islamophobia? Is it an aspect your label had to deal with so far?**

We had a lot of hate-mail as band and label originally but that subsided within the first year. There are still those that are ignorant to the fact that the label is called Shaytan defining evil - and believe this is "Islamic metal" the label promotes. I don't think those two things can ever co-exist hence the name Shaytan Productions.

**Do you make music yourself? If so, can you write a bit about your band/s?**

I do not make any music myself and learned only to play the Darbouka (hand drum) and guitar very minor.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases on your label? What are the plans for the future?**

In the near future Jan 2013 there will be the limited edition special by Al-Namrood. It will be the first release with a step away from the traditional jewel case on my label.

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

Is it available through our online shop through our website [www.shaytanproductions-shop.com](http://www.shaytanproductions-shop.com), and digital formats are readily available through iTunes, and outside of our shop the CD's are available through Amazon and other online retailers.

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

I don't use Twitter or facebook so only email is the preferred option [shaytanproductions@live.com](mailto:shaytanproductions@live.com)

**Some closing comments if you like**

Surprisingly I am celebrating the 4th year of the label creation =), thank you for the interview and time.

-Shahid

## Bad Suburban Nightmare

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

Ok, Bad Suburban Nightmare is a one man music project I started maybe around '09 but I had been doing home 4 track tape recordings before that. A lot of the musical themes started late '05. Its been haunting me for quite some time.

**Bad Suburban Nightmare is a curious name. It wakes memories on the urban development, particularly the one in the United States, in which the upper class part of society moves out of the cities and into the outer belt so to speak. Has it to do with this? Is it a somewhatself-conscious reflection of the place these people live in? And, curiously, there is a strange double negation in the name.**

The name was pretty much unconscious, I think I was aware of my ownboredom and alienation. It just felt like that was who I was, a bad or too sad suburban outsider, and it felt that was how I was living, and some nightmares too. I liked the bad and nightmare becuz nitemares are bad anyway, I thought that was funny.

**Yet, the oddness does not end here. Also the music itself is anything but normal. How would you describe your music in your own words?**

Hmm Id say its a lone freight train, a lone dog barking in th nite. I try to make music thats really coming from me, i try to channel and then transmitt some pure sadness, some pain. Yeh its a little weird, but i hope it honest. Its sad beauty, and heartbreak. A longing for whats gone (and s never commin back), and a longing for some other place (hope).

**Why do you play such music after all? Is it possible for your to name a starting point, an idea from where it all began? Do you have some albums that you use as a source for inspiration in this respect?**

How come? Its pretty much all I do, its somethin. I had this feeling that everything just went away and was gone. That might have been th starting point, but Im not 100% sure. When i was younger, before some things happened, i was really into godspeedyoublackemperor and th first a silver mt zion record, i just remember really relating to it. I think my guitar playing then was just me trying to do that, in my own way, my own version, if I could, and i didnt know if i could. but that was what i wanted to do.

Then when Dylan Carlson reformed his band Earth, that made me want to pick up my guitar again, and just try to do my own version of that. It just heavily resonated with me, that darkness. I'd say the two sound worlds Godspeed and Earth are a big influence on my music. They made me want to do something of my own.

**A characteristic element of your music is a general depressive atmosphere and minimalist concept. Why does this have such a fascination for you that you have created an entire album in this particular way?**

I like my music to be simple, the soundworld to be a little empty, it makes it lonelier. I get depression, I think it has a big influence in the bad suburban nightmare. It's honest that the music is depressive too. (like the man!)

**At times it felt you would play the music somewhat for yourself. I had the image in front of my eyes of someone on a stage in a desolate place, playing for basically the vastness of the surrounding emptiness. How would you respond to this?**

Yeah I think there's some of that, playing in your own world or the guy playing on the porch at night, like



that's the only way you can think of reaching the world. It's been really cool that the recordings resonated with others too, that it's been something they get, can relate to. I hope it's given them something...out there. The world does feel strangely empty sometimes, I think for me, it's some relief that it feels this way.

**Is there a chance to find some counterpoints, some more cheering ones, on a future album as well?**

I doubt it. But I think BSN is about finding somewhere away from (here). I think the new songs I'm working on, they're kind of long instrumentals with singing right at the end, are (sad) songs of hope.

**How do the title of the tracks and the music that you present in them play together? Is it some kind of mocking of the expectations with which some listener might approach your music?**

They're unconscious. I think if anything the jokes are on me.

**Is it possible for you to name a starting point for your music? What would be the first step so to speak and how do you proceed from there?**

Ok, I improvise around musical ideas, themes, chords. and just keep doing that, and over time it comes loosely together. Sometimes a song happens out of this. More recently I've been writing lyrics when they've come into my head, I still have some work to do on picking the right words for the songs. I get really into a particular chord progression, and slow it right down. I also like to do my more drone instrumentals, I improvise against the low open note. I basically have my slowed down sad country instrumentals and songs, and my drone pieces (also slow). My music is basically split between the two.

**What instruments do you use?**

Electric guitar, some pedals and an amp. I only sing when I have to.

**Why don't you use percussion instruments for instance?**

maybe i would if i had a drumset and practise space. But im pretty into th electric guitar on its own, making a big sound wth that, i quite like leaving it hanging there like that. and maybe id use some piano if i had an electric piano or keyboard. im thinkin if i do overdubs at all for th new recording, id like to maybe layer some guitar parts. im just pretty into th electric guitar as an instrument. and amps and pedals, its just rad to play.

**Why are some tracks instrumental, while others have lyrics? What would be the topic of your texts?**

what feels rite as song and what works as instrumental, i guess. i think th subject would be heartbreak longing, and missing.

**Your album 'Highways I' had been released by 'Must Die Records' not too long ago. Would this be your first output or do you have other ones as well? Do you plan to release other 'Highway' outputs in the future?**

yep that was th first cd i put out. what happened is i recorded highways one with my friend (future pizza), and we were going to try and self release it, sell it at shows. we did it in a day in a basement in lancaster, and we did a house show th nite before and recorded that too. then mustdie were interested in releasing it, which was some good fortune, so it got out to some more people. Rite now im working on highway 2, im recording it at home on 4 track and then sending it to future pizza for mixing/mastering, and hope to release that on mustdie too.

I did some shows for mustdie and we filmed them, so future pizzas also working on a bsn film goodbye cruel world/drone heartbreak.

**Who would be Nelson? You mention him in two of the track titles.**

nelson was my dog, and he died. he was like a brother to me, it hurt when he went, was gone. i wrote nelson nightmare when he was still around, but i didnt think hed be around for much longer, it was a sad time in my life. Th song started out as a song inspired by th film 'boys don't cry' a long time before that, and i decided to finish it and offer it up to my dog. Th songs as much about me as anything else.

**Can you write a few words about the cover artwork of this release? How does it fit together with your music?**

It was a felt tip drawing/painting i did around th same time as th record. its like a drawing of a lost girl, a ghost of a girlfriend. somethin like that.

**Are you involved in other bands beside BSN?**

Nope.

**What music do you generally listen to?**

u.s alt from th 90s (pavement, dinosaur jr, seaboh ..). earth. Richard bishop. constellation records. vic chesnutt. bill orcutt. hype williams. lil b. the for carnation. john frusciante. bardo pond. sons of otis. A grave with no name. jim o'rourke. daniel johnston. butthole surfers. Roky erickson. lynrd skynrd. melvins.

**Have you ever played live or do you plan to do so?**

yes 3 shows! one house show and 2 for mustdie.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases? What are the plans for the future?**

Yep. highway 2 on mustdie.

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

from mustdie records.

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

thru mustdie, i guess. and i have my soundcloud too.

**Some closing comments if you like**

Thankyou for interviewing me 'A Dead Spot of Nite', and thanks for reviewing my cd too.

[mustdierecords.co.uk](http://mustdierecords.co.uk) /// [soundcloud.com/badsuburbannightmare](https://soundcloud.com/badsuburbannightmare)

# The Kult ov SatanachiïA

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

We wish to thank you first for the interest on our band, and about this interview that will be conducted by Lord Igret von SatanachiiA : Bass/vocal

Well, The Kult of SatanachiiA always wished to play extreme Black Metal with True Black Metal roots, later we introduced a little bit melodic touch, the band is actually composed by myself and Nextiumarok on the guitars, we just parted ways with our second guitar player Trysphaitos and recruited a new promising drummer after a long period of stay without drummer.

**Who founded this band and how many of the original members are still present in the current line-up?**

The Kult of SatanachiiA is with no doubt the first Black Metal band in Algeria and maybe in North Africa, the project started in 1998 under the name of "Satanachia" it was formed by myself (Lord Igret von SatanachiiA) who played bass and co-founded by Ayrod who nowadays pursues his project Barbaros, he played guitars and drums, we had also at least two session drummers on the start, and for now I am the only original remaining band member.

**Your band has seen a considerable switch of personal over the years. What had been the reasons for this and did this have an effect on the style of your music for instance? How do you deal with the song-writing and such anyway?**

Yes, our band is sadly known for its unstable line-up, like we used to mention on our bio, it's hard to find the right members, we've had many talented musicians but the band wasn't satisfied by their spirit and this was the main reason to the line-up conflicts the band suffered over the years, but this doesn't affect the band's music and spirit because The Kult of SatanachiiA will always be dedicated to the purest essence of blackness, I was always a part of the song writing, there are some releases like the Promo Ep released in 2008 where I was the main composer and writer, I try to keep the proper personality of the band over the releases.

**Your name needs some explanation. According to the Metal Archives you originally started as Satanachia and released a demo under this moniker. Later you switched to The Kult ov SatanachiïA. Can you present the history for picking these and why you decided to use this very peculiar way of writing in the current version?**

Yes, this is right the band's original name is "Satanachia" and we made a rehearsal demo before Ayrod's departure to form his project Barbaros, I believe he was more focused on traditional-folk stuff than the evil or dark corner, after we quickly figured out that there's too many bands wearing the name Satanachia, a French one I remember, and also a Colombian band, so we switched it to "The Kult ov SatanachiïA" and it's under that name that the band was made official, but it will forever remain on the same spirit, and the major part of the metalheads in Algeria who knows us still call us "Satanachia", to conclude I just say it's not a really change, it's only a variant of the band name an "AKA" who says "Satanachia" in Algeria, automatically refer to "The Kult ov SatanachiïA" and NO OTHER BAND

**Why did you start this band after all? Had there been an album, a certain kind of music that sparked your interest? Furthermore, why black metal and not death metal for instance?**

When I met Ayrod, we decided to form a band, and his proposal was to form a Brutal Death Metal band, but I was more focused on dark stuff and for me Black Metal was a better way of expression, it also deals about north African Amazigh-berber mythology, there are many legends about spirits witchcraft and some occult stuff circling around, I was very influenced by the 80's-90's underground metal, as many metalheads that doesn't know it but we are no Darkthrone and no Burzum fans, "The Kult ov SatanachiïA" took its roots from bands like Throne of Azazel, The Black, Behemoth, Old Mayhem, Old Immortal, and also the first wave of black metal bands like Venom, Bathory (1983-1987), Hellhammer (especially Satanic Rites), Celtic Frost and Mercyful Fate and so many more, we also do love German Thrash and Heavy metal like Sodom, old Kreator, Destruction, old Grave Digger, along with the Australian wave like Sadistik Exekution and Bestial Warlust etc...



...concerning the Norwegian stuff it will always be three great influential persons to us, the first is of course is Euronymous (Oysten Aarseth R.I.P) the greatest of all, the second is Bard Faust Eithun ex-Emperor (we loved old Emperor stuff of 1991-1997), the third is Demonaz Doom Occulta because Immortal albums Diabolical Fullmoon Mysticism and Pure Holocaust had such an impact on us back in time! too bad Immortal changed direction after his departure; they could have shown another way of musical evolution.

**How would you describe the Algerian metal scene back in the early days of your band? What has changed since then?**

Well, there were two styles metalheads loved to play, Heavy/Speed metal, and something know as Algerian Thrash Metal or Algerian Death metal, two styles

very similar that are too heavy and in some way dark, the main difference was the vocals, while other bands showed some metalcore in the vein of modern Sepultura or Soulfly, this is why we wanted to go a step further in the extreme with The Kult ov SatanâchiîA, the most notable thing I didn't like in the Algerian scene back in time and still exists nowadays is the fact that the major part of the bands back in time thought that to be original is to make some stuff proper to our nation and culture of course I have nothing against that, but if you wanna make it why are you going to import a culture from mid-eastern lands and call yourself "Arabian Metal" or some other shit like "Oriental Metal" ? Algeria is the north of Africa as I know isn't? North Africa is Called Tamazgha, the land of the Amazigh people that have nothing to do with oriental culture, well, these people need to take some serious lessons in geography you know?



**Can you write a bit about your releases**

We made first a rehearsal demo, the most notable thing is that the drums were recorded with a traditional drum kit Ayrod made by himself!, haha curious to see it but it sounded good for a rehearsal, after his departure we gathered the songs the one I inspired him and the ones he composed and made them into a split after he formed his project, after that I was searching for some members, and I made a proposal to two friends that were from the area of Algiers, in "Bouzareah" much precisely, they had a band only for rehearsals and played only for pleasure I can barely remember the name it was "Hades" or something like that, some Black/Death metal stuff, they helped be me recording some songs in their local they had some material, and we made a second demo, after that everyone of them switched to other styles than metal, like Jazz and Gnawi, I realized that once again I have to find new members, in this time I made the most know band's line-up Consisting of Me on Bass, Strigorr Demetrius V. on Guitars and Arkhirion on the drums, it was a good line up but we had to may musical differences that prevented us to record something, so the line-up changed again and I started composing some songs that will fit more the band's style and can be played by every metal musician, it's in that time that my old friend Trysphaitos known as (Shiva) helped me for the records, we found a session drummer and recorded the Promo MCD 2008, and it's also at this time that we discovered the talented guitar player Nextiumarok who composed the instrumental song on the same MCD.

**Judging from the release dates your band does not seem to be a very active one. What prevented you from recording/spreading more music?**

The first reason was, that in Algeria there's no studios really allowed or competent to record Hard Rock or Metal, the second is that a studio record costs too much money, the third is the fact that The Kult ov SatanâchiîA is against any form samples and drum-machines drums are made to be played by a drummer and I can barely imagine a recording line-up without a drummer, or like some bands do, they record with drum-machines and make credit to a drummer name on their release!

Well we surely are an underground band, but we want our album to sound exactly like we want it to sound even if it will took us 100 years to record it !

**Not many will be familiar with your outputs, so why don't you lay out the basic elements of your concept. How would describe The Kult ov Satanâchiîa's approach?**

Speaking about our musical evolution, I can say that even if we had this underground raw True Black approach, our releases showed some musical variety, for example, in our early days we played a very raw form of Black Metal, on the second demo it was more a kind of a melodic True Black, after we started to "Extremize" this form of True Black Metal because we were so pissed of this critics who tend to reduce the True Black Metal to a simple basic music not so powerful, so we wanted to take the roots of this music and make it in a more extreme nature and avoid this kind of "Brutal Black Metal" that consists of bands who are copying Death Metal riffs to make their Black Metal sound "Brutal" by the way we don't like the term clichés and trendy terms like "Brutal Black Metal" or "Brutal Sympho Melodic" or other poser names we simply call our music Extreme Black Metal and let the listener guess about secondary elements like the True Black Metal Bases of our music or our Melodic touch, but I must say that with the addition of Nextiumarok he gaved the band new interesting stuff and interesting way of playing it's own style he's helping a lot about developing our musical identity, he has a Progressive touch In his way of playing Extreme Metal.

**Interestingly your music is generally quite fast and on the spot as well as focused on the early days of the black metal scene. Has this always been the case or has your approach evolved and therefore changed over the years?**

Well, speaking about our first release and the Promo MCD you're absolutely right, our influences can still be felt, but on our rehearsals and preferences it's not really the case this is why we are saving something more personal to make it on a "Fulllength"

**What do your lyrics deal with?**

Even if we are attached to the Mediterranean culture, it's not our main subject, because as many people who knows us know that the band lyrical themes are mainly focused on the occult, as a reader of occult books and science, one of the great personalities was "Salmon", he had the power to control every spirit from different circles and as everybody knows he had wrote a book about the method of controlling spirits and their seals, titled "Goetia the lesser key of king Salmon" his science was named "Goetia" by latin religions such as christianism and orthodoxes, it's interesting to see how he described every "Demon Seal", in this analysis you can find some attributes to the dark side and nature of every human in earth, the "Goetia" was always and object of misunderstanding in occultism, too many didn't know who to rightly understand this "Demon seals" analysis as an alliance of spirit that consists of "Matter" and another spirit consisting of "Anti-Matter" that was higher than the classical rapport of "Perverted" Spirit with "Unholy" Body, it's so "Human" attribute the others tend to avoid but they sadly fall into it, and of course it encourages the "Mythical" view of this occult science, we don't have to make compromise between Occult and Myth, because Myth can be "Pagan" but "Occult" is without doubt "Godly", of course with the end of the Pagan era and the starting of what we call "Religious Era" the man developed this idea of two worlds the world we are living in, a world of matter where we can touch and feel everything, and another world, a world of anti-matter were other spirits live whatever if they are good or bad, and this world always "Obsessed" the imaginary of men, we had also some other themes about medieval life in North Africa and Mediteranean-Northern Occultism, the Amazighs (Berbers) were influenced by the latin culture back in time and has some pagan gods taken from germano-Scandinavian people because they were a part of the vandal kingdom, our music is not focused on the Amazighs or the Berbers we are not a traditional band this is only our Origins

**Aside from this, how did and do you spread your music? Most of your releases appear to be distributed by the band, right? Have you been able to spread music outside of Algeria?**

We made our records by ourselves, and we distribute them in CDR format and also conceive the artwork by ourselves, we of course promoted these records outside of our country we sent many copies for webzines and fanzines, and made also trades

**Judging from the pictures and the logo your band follows a rather conservative version of black metal; corpse paint and pentagrams. Why are these elements important to you? How do you see the modern trends in the genre?**

You know, we are more focused on the music and occult than "how shall we look" we just respect the Black Metal in a personal way and that's all, we don't care about the "modern trends" as you say that are going to this great Fashion shops to buy a "Gothic Black Metal Modern Costume" just to look as a

"The Dark Evil Philosopher" and have great audience, for us it always has been, leather, spikes, chains, corpse paint, and that's all, for the logo we planned to make a "Restyling" but still in the same spirit and more innovative in the strict band's perspective

**Did you ever had a chance to play live? In case this would be the case, can you write a bit about this experience.**

We played in good events such as the "Lelahel Festival" along with Slavery and Carnavage, and in other fests such as "Tizi Rock Fest", the Lelahel Fest was of particular memory to us because it was the best Metal Festival in our country, it was it's 4th edition and I believe we were the first Black Metal Band to perform Black Metal live in North of Africa along with the Black Metal stuff as corpse paint and the rest, I can remember the expressions on the people faces, many of them were shocked to see this new way of conducting a show, while other appreciate it, after this show many bands begins to use the Black Metal look for making shows

**Speaking of live music, what role does metal play in Algeria in this respect? Is it possible to see bands on stage and how often would this be the case?**

Well, of course it's possible to see bands on stage, the point is that I think the actual scene is not too good as the past scene lol! I don't say that by pure nostalgia but comparing the past bands, the past shows, we can easily see that the metal scene changed a lot, and not in a good way, in addition to that many Hardcore and punk bands appeared and are trying to make a "Core" standard to the Metal, sadly the other bands are just following this stupid idea, in addition to many other clichés that are drowning the scene into Emo stuff

**What is the status of metal and hard rock in Algeria anyway? Can you describe the music scene a bit for us? How difficult is it to obtain metal releases in stores for instance?**

To Obtain metal releases in stores in Algeria is quite impossible, you got to make some trades, or go to a store and give him a list of CD's you want while he goes to purchase them in Europe for you, like if he was to purchase any other normal stuff, the status of the Metal scene was always between metalheads hands, for example in the past we had "Lelahel Events" that was organizing events and shows, now we have a new organization that try to keep the metal scene alive called "EX FEST" that made a few good shows for a start, the third possibility is that you have to go make a show for your band by yourself and the help of the band who's going to play onstage with you

**You have plans for an album that will see the light of day at the end of 2012. Can you write a bit it?**

Yeah, we try to got all the stuff we need to record it, it will be a self produced piece, as I said, after an exhaustive search we found a good young drummer that is capable to show some good drumwork concerning Black Metal, we got eight tracks ready and in "a new band's musical perspective" and maybe more extreme, faster and also "old schoolish", it will be a combination of all the musical experience gained over the years in the Black Metal domain

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

Well we didn't decide to deal with distros yet we still distribute our music by our selves, if someone is interested about our music he just has to contact us via internet

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

We have use some sites such as, Last.fm, Myspace and others, people can contact us at: [Thekultofsatanachiia@gmail.com](mailto:Thekultofsatanachiia@gmail.com) we shall answer any questions and proposal for the band

**Some closing comments if you like**

I wish to thank you for your interest in our band, and I also Hail all the people who supported us Through the years, and the old Metal Dudes who helped us in the start back in the 90's, keep the Black Flame burning high!



# Must Die Records

**Why don't you start off the interview with presenting the person/s, whose duty it is to answer these questions. What role do you play in terms of the label and are there other persons involved in it as well?**

Must Die Records is run by Carlito Juanito and Rich T. There are no defined roles. We both do a bit of everything.

We've both had a hand in answering the questions.

**Let us start with some basic ones:**

**Could you explain to the readers the background of the name of your label. What made you pick it?**

Must Die? Its a Memento mori thing. It's a reminder to not get too serious about life. Back in ancient Rome, in order to keep egos in check, there would be a fellow employed or slave told to whisper into ear of the returning triumphant general or current champion charioteer something along the lines of "yep, your champ now but eventually even you must die". Life can be pretty sweet if you view it this way. It's liberating.

**Why and when did you start this label after all? What is the motivation behind it? Is there even some kind of philosophy apparent, which finds and has found its manifestation through the releases?**

The concept of Must Die came into being just over two years ago. The motivation then, as it is now, is the love of music and the joy of hearing and exploring new music and musical styles. Spreading good art/music is the primary motivation; consequently we sell our releases as cheap as we can. Just enough to cover the cost of production and continuation of the label. We also make many of our releases free for download on the internet.

**In terms of the music, then what kind of concepts and style can be found on your label? Are you open to all kinds of music or do you keep it narrowed to a specific kind of it? What genres have been covered by your label so far? Do you think such is an important aspect of a label?**

Must Die is an exploration of experimental and leftfield music, there is also a strong DIY ethic at the core of the label.

Initially we were a "noise" only label. As things have progressed music has come our way that we liked but that did not fit into this category. So, rather than not release it and be restricted we thought it would be healthier to broaden the horizon.

We are open to all kinds of music but it needs to be interesting of course. We are on the side of experimental.

Genres covered include, digi-dub, noise, psychedelic sludge rock, drone, 8-bit, hardcore, experimental, ambient, poetry and work that has no definable category.

Do we think a diversity of genres is an important aspect of the label? Important, no. Its important that we both like or find the release interesting in some way.

**Can you present some of the bands that have appeared on your label so far?**

Ceramic Hobs

Nigel Joseph

Stained Afro

Seven Footsteps to Satan

Bad Suburban Nightmare

Wrested Thread

Ignorance

Bedawang

Uncle Paul

We are not cartoons

King Summat Sound

Forthcoming are:

The A Band

Left Hand Cuts off the Right

Kid Toy Jam Band

Astral Social Club

Finger Fangs

Smell and Quim

The Drop Out Wives

Naff Natty

Jeremy Gluck

Mad Tyrant

**How do artworks and music play together? Do you collaborate with artists that create them for you? Or do bands approach you with a ready-made concept that merely needs to be printed and distributed? Diy, hand-made or professional, what would be your opinion on these three concepts?**

We've always thought artwork was a really important element of any album. We've both bought a lot of things purely as the artwork interested us. But, also, if you are going to put so much time and effort into creating something aural then you do yourself a great disservice being blasé about the packaging. This is just our opinion of course.

Sometimes the bands approach us with artwork, or ideas, but mostly the artwork is done in house.

DIY, hand made or professional? Well, the former two are always going to be more interesting for us. Its a more personal kind of art.

**How would you describe your own cultural environment. How does your label fit into this? Do you support bands from your region?**

Our local cultural environment is ok. Obviously the mainstream has the upper hand, as anywhere, but there are interesting things going on all the time and the underground scene is healthy. We're also in easy reach of a couple of other cities that have interesting and healthy scenes. We've had some great support locally from people who have a deep love of music in all its forms and just want to help out because of that. Some wonderful altruistic acts. It's been a very nice life affirming side effect.

We do support local bands....or maybe they support us? Its a two way street. We have two releases by local bands and one upcoming one.

We have also promoted a couple of live band nights and have another planned for December.

**When it comes to formats, then what can be found on your label? Can you explain for picking some and leaving out others? Do you prefer analogue over digital?**

Our favourite format will always be vinyl. For the depth of sound and the artefact itself. You can find vinyl in our online shop in the form of Ceramic Hobs excellent seven inch, "33trapped Chilean miners".

We have another vinyl single in the pipeline but at the moment most of our releases are available on cd due to it being a way cheaper format. We can release a slew of cds for the price of one vinyl.

Analogue or digital? Analogue all the way!

**Is it important for you to not only having a well crafting design, but also a booklet with all the lyrics and the information on the release?**

Design is important for us for reasons previously stated. With each release we are becoming more experimental with the packaging. Lack of a deep pit of money means we have to be constructive with what we have. It's liberating in a way.

A lot of the work we release has no lyrics but we are always looking out for way to make the release special. As with everything it's a learning curve.



**What about special/limited editions? What would be your opinion on these? Do you sell such or do you plan to do so?**

We do not produce huge runs of our releases so in a way they are all limited editions. We did do two versions of the Ceramic Hobs vinyl. One cream and one black. The limited cream version came with a special edition of their last album "Oz Oz Alice". We only have a few copies of these left though. Be quick!

**Is it necessary that the music on your label reflects in some respect also your own preferences or would it be possible for you to spread something that you appreciate for its own merit, even though it might be difficult for you to listen to or enjoying it?**

Its not important at all that it reflect our own preferences. In order for us to release anything we both either have to like it or, indeed, be able to appreciate it for it's own merit. We have released work that falls into the difficult for us to listen to camp. We're lucky in that we're both very open minded when it comes to what is termed "music".

**How do you deal with reviews and interviews? Do you send physical copies to writers and magazines or do you prefer to deal with MP3 stuff for this kind of matter? Do you think these written works still play a role in an age of the omnipresence of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter?**

Physical copies are always a preference over digital copies. The artwork/package can be an integral part of a release, and it's important (especially for a reviewer) to evaluate the whole package.

Written works and social media sites can work hand in hand quite nicely but of course written work will always play a role. Personal blogs are taking this into a different realm.

**When it comes to criticism and negative reviews, then how do you deal with this aspect? Do you pass such stuff on to the bands? Do you respond to the person that confronts you with them? Is it even possible to find them on your homepage? What is an honest review from your point of view?**

A review should be an honest reflection/interpretation of a piece of work. It would be ludicrous to disregard criticism and negative reviews. It is important to embrace both the negative and the positive. At the end of the day everything is subjective anyway. We've had rotten reviews and praise for the same release. Either is gratefully received. Its all promotion for the label or artist and, interestingly, whether the review is good or bad, the hits on the must die website for that artist go up.

**Is it easy for you to reach out to fans and sell your outputs?**

At first it wasn't but it has become better as, obviously, the more releases you have the further the word spreads. There are a great many forums dedicated to interesting left field work that also help. In the internet age it's obviously much easier to reach your target audience. Must Die is quite popular in South America for some reason. We had no part in promoting ourselves there so, something is working. It kind of has a life of it's own now. We have released it into the wild as it were.

**Do you distribute all the music by yourself or do you collaborate with other labels or distros in this respect?**

We have worked in collaboration with other channels of distribution and are always willing to consider different options.

**How do you see the aspect of downloads and tendency to 'piracy' music? Do you feel or are bothered by this sting?**

Modern music piracy has certainly had impact on the consumption of music, though we're unsure if it is a negative or a positive impact. It is easy to become inundated and reduce the amount of quality time spent with music. Though it has also expanded peoples horizons, and interests in music.

The often quoted argument that piracy is somehow a move against the corporation, sidestepping the obvious hypocrisy that it will have most likely been downloaded on machines purchased from other corporations is tiring. People who download a lot of pirated music are also often the same people who love music the most and are probably spending more on music than those who aren't engaging in piracy.

What is important is to support music; buying releases from musicians directly, supporting small labels, attending local live events etc.

A lot of the music on our label is released under various Creative Commons Licenses and where possible this is something we'd encourage the artists on Must Die to consider as an option.

**How can bands submit music to your label? What steps are necessary for this?**

We actively encourage music submissions, and we will respond to every submission we receive. We have to be quite picky about what we decide to release due to financial restraints, but are always on the lookout for something new.

Music can be submitted by contacting us via email: [demos@mustdierecords.co.uk](mailto:demos@mustdierecords.co.uk)

**And now to something more specific and different:**

You use a rather strange kind of image on your homepage. It expresses an aggressiveness and intensity which is actually not part of your label. On a sampler it makes an appearance as well. Can you explain your reasons for picking it and how it fits into the concept of your label?

Quite right. When Must Die started we were a "noise" label and so the logo suited. We still like it. There is something quite incongruous about promoting the label with it considering some of the acts now on the roster. We are due an overhaul of the website though so, who knows, it may become part of the past.

**How do you look on the modern music scene? Do you feel it is quite confusing and with too many bands and releases to keep track off?**

It's an exciting time musically. Maybe there are too many bands but there is nothing like a little competition. The more the merrier. It is hard to keep track but the quality stuff will always shine through hopefully. Especially at our level where you don't have a billion pound industry ramming something down your throat every five minutes. The only thing you have is the music or sound.

**When it comes to finding new music, then how do you deal with this aspect? Are you a searcher that likes to dig through the pages at bandcamp for instance?**

We are both avid music collectors and gig goers and do trawl the likes of soundcloud and bandcamp. It's been a while since we approached anyone about their music though. To be honest we receive a healthy amount of demos now. Most of it is quality work too so we have to pick and choose carefully what to release due to financial restrictions. Adding to the frustration of not being able to put out everything we like would not be fun.

**Do you make music yourself? If so, can you write a bit about your band/s?**

We both make music. We have a couple of projects together and a few solo things.

This may not be the right place to promote them but some of them are, King Summat Sound, Kid Toy Jam Band, SFTS, Variable Phantom, Stained Afro etc etc.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases on your label? What are the plans for the future?**

There are a number of exciting releases about to come out over the next couple of weeks and months:

The A Band	Smell and Quim
Left Hand Cuts off the Right	The Drop Out Wives
Kid Toy Jam Band	Naff Natty
Astral Social Club	Jeremy Gluck
Finger Fangs	Mad Tyrant

Our plans for the future are to keep on releasing interesting work, gig promotion and seeing how far we can push the Must Die envelope.

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

Music is available directly from our website, via live events, through discogs....

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

The most direct online communication would be through our website "[mustdierecords.co.uk](http://mustdierecords.co.uk)". We are also active on Soundcloud, Tumblr, and Facebook.

**Some closing comments if you like**

Many thanks for the interview and past album reviews in your excellent zine.



**Who am I addressing and what members make up the band Glina?**

Hi there! My name is Sergey and I'm the bass player of Glina. There are four other band members besides me: Alexey is the guitar player, Ivan plays drums, Ilia - on "Spiritual safety" he played saxophone and now deals with the guitar, Olga is the vocalist and Yuri makes noise with the synthesizer.

**Could you elaborate a bit on the band name? Is there a special meaning behind it?**

Glina is the Russian word and it means "clay" in English. In our case the band name speaks for itself: we always wanted that our music sounds raw, heavy-bodied, maybe mystical or even occult, you know.

**Why don't you write a bit about the history of the band? When did you start it, what were the influences and how has the band evolved/changed over the years?**

At the time the band started (in 2001-2002), we (I, Alexey and Ivan) were students at Saint-Petersburg State University. We all were interested in free jazz, modern improv and played a lot of jams with other musicians. Little by little, we came up with idea to set up our own recording studio. Of course, It all began from home studio and our early experiments turned into self-released records: "Vyazkost pochv" (2002), "Skvajina" (2003), "Daby preuspet!" (2004), "Nory" (2004). With the lapse of time our equipment has grown, skills have been increased, we met great singer/performer Mikhail and together were carried away by another project that was called Benzolnye Mertvecy. It was explosive mixture of trashy blastbits, harsh-noise guitars and epileptic live performances. Later we were joined by Ilia, who made a big difference in the quality of our sounding. Finally we managed to achieve some success: we played a lot of shows, participated in various festivals Skif-12 (Saint-Petersburg), Budapest Spring Festival (Budapest), Baba Fest (Rome) and even had a tour in Italy, collaborated with painters (Grigori Yushchenko, Alexander Korolev), writers and poets (Vladimir Kozlov, Nataliya Romanova, Fedor Sveshnikov), were involved in a theatrical performance "It is not Hamlet" that was directed by maître of the modern Russian theatre Andrei Moguchi, layed down the soundtracks of silent films, our records were regularly published by such labels as Fulldozer, Yaizekletka, Post-Materialization Music, Distorted Bible Stories, Rauha Turva, Puzzle, Wort, No=Fi, Selva Elettrica. In 2009 with Olga and Yuri we formed another band, Coaxil, influenced by minimalist and electronic composers. And in 2010 we have recorded "Spiritual safety" with extended membership and refreshed concept. In general, at this moment our community numbers ten regular participants involved in such projects as Glina, Benzolnye Mertvecy, Coaxil, Harlekino, Mars-96.

**There are not many information on your band in the Internet, so it had been very kind of you to provide me with the following one: Vyazkost pochv (2002), Skvajina (2003), Daby preuspet! (2004), Nory (2004), Sdelai tak, chtob bylo krasivo (2008). These are the releases that have seen the light of day so far; ignoring 'Spiritual Safety' for a moment. Why don't you present your oeuvre a bit, because not many will be familiar with them. How would you describe the conceptual background of these? What kind of format (physical/digital) did you use for them?**

As I mentioned above, these releases were our first steps. We hadn't any solid concept – we just played music, made a raw live record and located it on different resources.

**Are they sold out or are some of them still available? In case this would be true, is there a chance to see a re-release at some point in the future?**

I'd like to believe that some of them are still available in the open access. As for reissue, I hope that in the nearest future we will be re-releasing "Daby preuspet!" on cassette tape.

**From today's perspective, how do you look back on your early works? Are you still able to enjoy them? What has changed over the years? Do you think you have established some sort of framework, which you can use as a starting point for future outputs or is everything still in a flux, a constant tendency to innovate so to speak?**

I would say they are very naive. And it's great! – in my sight, we will never be able to record something like that again. What has changed over the years? - first of all, our perception of the world has and as a consequence music-view also has changed.

**How have the responses on your releases been? Were you able to reach out to folks outside of your local sphere?**

To tell the truth, we didn't track this point.

**'Spiritual Safety' would be your latest output. Contrary to your previous ones, this happens to have an English title. What were your reasons for this change in style and could you elaborate a bit on the reasons for picking it?**

Actually, I don't know how it happens. Usual we use transliteration for our titles.

**Why did you choose an analogue format for it? Furthermore, it seems somewhat surprising that the booklet is kept in such a minimalist kind of way. Also the entry at bandcamp leaves the listener rather puzzled and I was not able to track down a homepage of yours. So, why this minimalism and mystery in terms of the band?**

We didn't choose the format, we chose the label. However, it is worth nothing that most of our community records released on cassette tapes. I think, this is due to the fact that cassette culture and DIY esthetic are inseparably linked together. As for booklet, we just tried not to overload it.

**Back to 'Spiritual Safety': How does the cover artwork play into this? The juxtaposition of blurry water colour drawing and ordinary black one is a curious thing. As it had been done by an artist, how much of an impact did this person have on the concept?**

The artwork was completely done by Maiorov, an artist from Murmansk, and Sasha from Jozik records. This is what she write in her blog (<http://sashakretova.blogspot.com>): "In the very beginning we had an idea of making an insert out of white paper with a black and white drawing on it, which would be differently painted with watercolor on each cassette separately. And that's what we actually ended up with, but we also got a nice new experience. I was taking so long time to come up with a drawing. I kept sketching animals, plants and other things and nothing valuable came out. I am not so good in drawing, really. One day i was checking a blog of one artist i'm following and realized, that this guy's drawings are exactly what i'm looking for. He is an artists from Murmansk, his blog is called Maiorov-DIY, check his drawings and other things he makes, i really like them. So i contacted him and he was happy to participate, and the next day i got this cute cockroach. The day after i got another drawing with many little cockroaches. I was supposed to choose one, but they were so pretty that i decided to use them both, one on the outer part of the insert and another one inside. After i got the drawings, i placed them and all the needed text in places, printed the inserts on greyish paper, cut them out and then the most fun part began. I painted each of them differently with watercolor, as we planned. As i already mentioned in previous posts, i love painting with watercolor, so i had lots of fun painting these inserts. I still have a bit less than a half to paint."

**When it comes to the music, then how long did it take you to get it done? Did you have some sort of a definite plan when you began working on the compositions for this release?**

There was no planning. We just recorded our regular jam and Ilia made some mixing and mastering work. That's all. If I am not wrong It took for us a few days.

**From your perspective, how does this release compare to your previous ones? In case someone would like hear something similar from you, then what release/s would you recommend?**

In my opinion, "Spiritual Safety" very differs from previous releases. As a matter of fact, it's two different bands - the only thing that remains the same is the improvisational approach to composition. For the person who like the drone side of Glina I want to recommend our new release <http://steakauzoo.bandcamp.com/album/arabian-horses-glina-split-tape>. It's a split cassette tape that we made with our friends from Moscow sonic-drone duo Arabian Horses. It was published by STEAK AU ZOO records. Also I want to recommend another split tape, that was published by Jozik records <http://www.jozikrecords.net/>: the first side of this tape is a collaboration between a Russian duo Punktieren (it's one of many Ilia's projects) and a Finnish musician Ous Mal, on the other side there's Coaxil <http://coaxil.bandcamp.com/>

**Glina's art is generally experimental and does not put too much emphasis on conventional song-writing concepts. Why do you avoid these and compose music that is rather complex, at times noisy and has a certain ritualistic touch?**

This is a very interesting and at the same time really hard question to which I have no clear answer. In our case music is a stream of collective consciousness. For some reason, this modernistic approach proved to be the most convenient for all of us. Why did it happen? I have no idea.

**Your music is not particularly cheerful. Is this melancholic atmosphere intentional or merely a facet of the 'Spiritual Safety' tape?**

As one can see, not only "Spiritual Safety" but also most of our recent works are permeated with unfeigned sadness. As for me, we just have deal here with serotonin hunger)

**What kind of instruments do you use and are you self-taught or did you have had a chance to receive some kind of teaching?**

We use a lot of various stuff at our sessions: saxophone, guitars, different effects, floor toms, cymbals, synthesizers, samplers, laptops. And most of us had lessons, but we don't improvise over tonal music so for us it's not a big deal.

**How do you deal with the variety of instruments that tend to appear in the compositions? As Jozik Records described Glina as a 'jam band', are a lot of passages and arrangements the result of some kind of jamming around that had been worked on later?**

No, It's always free improvisation.

**How important are the aspect of contrasts, catchiness, variety, complexity and intensity for you?**

Not so much: for us It's just well-known techniques, along with others.

**What impact does the cultural environment of St. Petersburg have on your band? Do you collaborate with other bands and artists? In an e-mail you have written that 'we even played in theater and layed down the sound tracks in the cinema for silent movies'. Would it be possible for you to give some examples? How did these events turn out? What other kind of collaborations did you participate in?**

As i already mentioned, we collaborated with St. Petersburg painters Grigorii Yushchenko, Alexander Korolev and poets Nataliya Romanova, Fedor Sveshnikov. We were involved (as Benzolnye Mertvecy) in a theatrical performance "It is not Hamlet": we appeared on the scene from the puff of smoke and coughed up brand noisecore combos. Also we participated in the project "Silent films+Live music" in the capacity of tapeurs: on-the-fly we layed down the soundtracks for classical silent films "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (directed by Rouben Mamoulian) and "The Black Pirate" (directed by Albert Parker).

**The aspect of German is an interesting aspect of your 'Spiritual Safety' tape. Why did you pick this language? Did you learn it at some point? Do you like the sound? Are there other languages on this release as well? What about your other outputs? Curiously, the texts do not appear in a normal ordinary fashion but distorted; here: through the use of a wrong (intentional (?) mistakes in the grammar. Can you elaborate this aspect a bit? I had read on the site of a Finnish distro, how this aspect confused this person, because the language could not be made out. On the other hand, I felt bewildered by the mistakes, because normally a band would avoid these and present a well crafted/tuned piece of text. As the vocals generally mark an important focal point of the music, you seem to mock this aspect and confuse those who are familiar with the German tongue. How have the responses been in terms of this release and did you receive some feedback that emphasized the use of language in particular? Were the 'lyrics' improvised during the recording or planned beforehand? Is this (has this been) an aspect that you explored on various releases before, is there a chance to hear similar approaches on future albums as well or has this been a one-time thing? Would an artificial language not also did its purpose? Or had there always been the intention to leave a door open to those who like to dig deep into analysing this tape?**

*[note from the editor: the band merged several questions together, which lead to this large and rather pointless block of text]*

Actually, It's hard to call the language. Most likely it is an imitation of the language. Similar kind of singing, for example, can be found at swing music of the thirties-forties: Fats Waller, Cabell Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald - they all used different sounds and words for an emotional content of their songs. If I am not mistaken, this style of singing was called scat. So why do we use German? You are right, we just like how it sounds. And we use this technique for all our projects.

**How do you see Glina in terms of experimental audio performances, like they can be found on Ubu to some extent? Example: <http://www.ubu.com/sound/ruhm.html>**

Yeah, it's very interesting. I think, we have some similar moments at our earlier works - I mean some elements of field recordings. If you talking about spoken words, I think it's not our case).



**Are you able to enjoy contemporary music as well? Is Glina an escape from the more commercial and mainstream oriented stuff?**

On one side, of course, we make all in context of music that we all like to listen and in most cases it's far from mainstream. On the other side, for most of us music is some kind of hobby, you know, and we don't want to turn it into the job.

**How do you see the development of the music scene anyway? What has changed over the years and do you feel you are able to keep track of everything?**

Recently I discovered a lot of interesting and very different diy bands, I mean really different). I think, all the fuss is taking place in the local noncommercial scenes. And it always has been like this, at least since the forties. Only the polished and glossed product gets big stage. However, nowadays it's much easier to catch the works of such groups and, for sure, it makes a big difference.

**What about side-projects? Would you mind writing a bit on these? What is their status right now?**

Well, I'll try to tell you in short about each project that regular has releases and gigs (in my opinion, it's much better to listen than to talk about):

Benzolnye Mertvecy (<http://benzolnyemertvecy.bandcamp.com/>) is a noise rock/art-punk quintet . Coaxil (<http://coaxil.bandcamp.com/>) is an audio-visual performance group. In order to understand what does it mean, I think, one should watch this video <http://youtu.be/A3372sSFsYc>. And Mars-96 (<http://mars96.bandcamp.com/>) is a nowave trio.

**Why is 'Spiritual Safety' available as a free download on the bandcamp entry, while others do not appear there? Might this change at some point in the future? What about downloads in general? Do you have an opinion about this tendency?**

We are of the opinion that at least the music (and the art in general) should not be someone's property. I think you realize that it is not only our merit that we made this record. A lot of people had a finger to this pie and it is the way how we divided it)

**Do you have some releases available right now?**

No, but in nearest future we will have some new releases – split coaxil/banana pill & wozzeck on already dead tapes rec. (<http://alreadydeadtapes.com>), split coaxil/illia belorukov on rauha turva (<http://rauhaturva.blogspot.com>), albums of mars-96 on snowcitytapes (<http://snowcitytapes.bandcamp.com>) and nostress (<http://www.nostressnetlabel.net>), glina and coaxil on haze (<http://h-a-z-e.org>). And we got tons unreleased material. So we will be glad any collaboration and cooperation with other bands and label owners.

**How can someone contact you?**

Here is our email [glina.band@gmail.com](mailto:glina.band@gmail.com)

**Some final words if you like.**

Thanks a lot for your questions – I was very pleased to answer them despite the fact that it tooks a lot of time for me, I think you should know what I mean). And wish you and all readers of your zine all the best!



# The Winchester Club

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

The Winchester Club is a London based post rock band. We started quite a while ago in 2000. I started the band as I wanted to play some long form post rock style stuff. I was playing with Jerry (guitarist) in the country band CHINESEBURN at the time. We got together with Harry and Jonny as well, who I have played in bands with before. So it was nice to bring together musicians that I already knew and had come from different backgrounds musically. By the way at I am Tim (drums).

**Your name sounds rather elitist and snobbish. It reminds on some strange obscure organization that has survived the tides of time and is still paying homage to this long out of service weapon for reasons that are impossible to fathom. So, could you enlighten us on the background of your band name?**

The name actually comes from an old (1970's) English tv show called "minder" which is a sort of comedy-drama show about a guy who tries to be a bit of a gangster, and his bodyguard. They go drinking in a bar called "the winchester club". It's quite a cult show in the UK, and a friend of ours suggested it, and I really liked it, so we kept it. There's no connection to winchester rifles but other people have thought its about that, which I don't mind.

**What kind of music do you play and what makes it so fascinating for you? Can you name albums that have and still work as a source of inspiration? Is the music something that marks an essential part of your musical collection as well?**

Like I said we do mostly epic instrumental post rock stuff so far. The main stuff I was listening to back then was GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR and MOGWAI. Specific albums would be: GY!BE - "slow riot for new zero Kanada" and MOGWAI "come on die young". I guess they're my fave post rock albums.

**Is this fascination shared by all band members or are there differences in terms of the preferences?**

No we all like different stuff. I would say I am the biggest fan of that genre, the others like more eclectic stuff from metal to country, electronica and more.

**Can you write a bit about your releases? It is interesting to see that seven years lie between your first demo and your debut album. What kind of music do you play on each? How do they differ from each other ... etc.**

Drown little joys in work and distress (2000)

This is very raw, it was a demo we did very soon after forming the band. It's quite basic and not as heavy as later work. There are some ideas I'd like to revisit.

Britannia Triumphant (2007/8)

This took ages to release as we recorded it in 2000 but didn't finish it til 2007! It got lost a couple of times so we had to rerecord lots of parts. The title track is probably my favourite.



### Negative Liberty (2011)

we did this after a lot of tour dates in Europe so we have the material completed and it was done within a few months. I'm really pleased with the track "the end of history" I think it's the best track we've done so far. This is probably the heaviest we've done so far.

### **How has the feedback or the responses to your releases been so far?**

The Britannia album got some really good press we were so surprised and it sold out very quickly. We had some very good feedback on the latest one too.

### **Why do you play such a calm version of post-rock? Especially the latest album comes with a lot of these moments in which everything reaches for a very peaceful atmosphere and at times even minimalist setting. Disruptions or stark contrasts are something that is kept out of your realm it seems.**

Hmmm that's funny I think there's plenty of loud stuff on the last release... there's no conscious decision to make it quiet or minimalist, it just reflects the way ideas come about in the studio. I think a lot of recent post rock stuff tends to be mostly heavy so I guess ours may sound mellower by contrast.

### **There are also no interludes and elements woven into the tracks that would divert from the main motive/s. Should post-rock have a certain constant flow in the music? Is there a chance to see or rather hear more experimentation on a future release?**

I think there will be more of that on the next record. In the older stuff we wanted to see what we could get from the simplest of starts. Perhaps there will be more intricacies in the future material.

### **You seem to prefer the traditional setting of making music (judging from the instruments used for the albums) with only a few electronic elements. Can you elaborate this topic a bit? Is this reflected in your musical tastes as well or are you more tolerant in this respect?**

We'll we are all from a background of being in 'traditional' rock bands, so that is just what comes naturally. We do have samples and laptops onstage but it's mostly about what sounds right for each track. There's no great desire to introduce more electronic elements for the sake of it. As far as personal taste goes I love electronic stuff, such as Boards of Canada, Aphex Twin etc.

### **Your three releases have each samples of various origins. Can you write a bit about your reasons for picking them, your 'reluctance' to use vocals and what role they play in your overall concept?**

We're constantly collecting samples as we go, some of the early ones were from shortwave radio broadcasts, 'numbers stations' and random stuff I'd found on the web. The samples for the last album were all from the "The Trap" TV series, which we based the entire album around.

We've never really considered using vocals seriously (apart from a very old track on our first demo). I find vocals really difficult to get right, if they don't fit exactly with the music it just sounds awful. I just don't think we need to add vocals to the music, I'm hoping the songs can do the talking for themselves.

### **Do you plan the use of them or do you stumble over one by chance and write the music around it?**

They run hand-in-hand. when it comes to rehearsing I'll have a bunch of samples that I want to use, and as the song comes together, I'll try to work the samples in to the song as it develops.

### **Most of the time you use them in the sense of an introduction or as an option to close a composition. Why not in the middle or in the sense as creating some kind of narrative through an otherwise instrumental composition?**

It's all about finding a space for the samples to sit. Most often, this is best during a quiet passage which is most often at the beginning of a composition. We used only a few samples on the last album, just the essential ones that sounded the best.

### **While your debut album Britannia Triumphant had some slight melancholic tendencies, your latest output Negative Liberty – and this might come as a surprise considering the title of it – has less of this facet. Do you feel the same about these two recordings?**

no, not really... a big part of writing the songs is to try to find the most melancholic, heart-breaking sounds we can. I think there were some good moments on the first album, but I thought we got closer on the last one, especially at the end of 'the lonely robot' and 'end of history'.

**Both of your album releases come with a well-crafted design in terms of the CDs. Did you approach your label Exile on Mainstream Records with this idea of spreading it in this particular way or has this been the result of a mutual exchange of ideas?**

In fact it was mostly the exile label that suggested we do some great packaging for the albums, which we were really excited by. The first album had been finished for a little while and Exile offered to give it a proper release with a woodpak CD case. The last album was a collaborative effort, I outlined what we wanted to do and the label expanded on it so we had the art cards etc. I'm really pleased with how they turned out. It takes us quite a while to write and release material so we like the finished product to be the best it can be. If we were releasing albums every year then maybe they'd be a bit more sparsely packaged!

**Your comments on the tendency to download music instead of buying the albums?**

I think its a double-edged sword. On the one hand I'm glad that people get to hear the music, but at the same time it's good to get some money in to do new stuff. Downloading music is now a fact of life so you have to accept that it happens and try to make the best of it.

**You have also hit the stage quite a few times. What is it that listener can experience at a concert of 'The Winchester Club'. Do you play the music as it appears on the releases or do you add some variation to it? What about cover versions, are they part of your performance?**

We tend to keep the live shows pretty close to the recorded versions. In addition we have live backdrop visuals to go with the music which are crucial to the show. For the last album all the visuals were taken from the TV show "The Trap", so they have a flow and common theme to the them. The visuals for the older material are more random, taken from various films/TV Brodacasts and home-made video. We don't tend to do covers any more.. We did do a cover of the theme tune to the 'Minder' show i spoke about before, but that was quite a long time ago now.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases? What are the plans for the future?**

We've started writing our 3rd album now, I hope we'll have enough to record by next year. Thats as far as our plans go right now.

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

From the following:

In the EU/worldwide -Direct from Exile on Mainstream - <http://www.mainstreamrecords.de/shop>  
or in the UK - from our bandcamp site - <http://thewinchesterclub.bandcamp.com/>

**How can people get in touch with you? What Internet sites do you use?**

Our site is at - <http://www.thewinchesterclub.org>

We use Facebook and Twitter mostly:

<http://www.facebook.com/thewinchesterclub>

<http://www.twitter.com/winchesterclub>

**Some closing comments if you like**

Many thanks for including us in your mag, good luck with future issues!

# Analgesia

(questions answered by Youssra Atmen, the vocalist of the band]

**Why don't you start off by introducing the band a bit? When and by whom had it been started? Who would conduct this interview?**

Analgesia is a symphonic metal band founded in 2005 by guitarist songwriter, and music composer Ahmed Zine, its music is known by its orchestral sphere wrapped in melodic symphonies.

**How would you describe your music and what have been your reasons for playing it? Can you name influences in this respect?**

The idea at first was to lead the Moroccan metal music with a melodic rock based on two guitars, heavy solos and riffs, most of the first album tracks are power metal toned, then with the second album it became more smooth and more orchestral

On their early album "return to the self" the music sounded more traditional, and melodic rock based on two guitars, heavy solos and riffs. As the sound of the vocalist who has a power metal tone, the atmosphere was described as hard-rock music.

After "Remission of Sins" single things took another stream, with soaring female operatic vocals, strings, progressive melodies. Then the keyboard, strings, choir and symphonies developed the style to become a Symphonic metal band. The songwriter-guitarist of the band describes it as "Somewhere between progressive, power, heavy and symphonic metal"

**When it comes to musical background of the band members, are there differences between them? Who would be responsible for composing the compositions and writing the lyrics? Do you have influences from your own traditional cultural sphere in your way of approaching metal?**

That what makes Analgesia members what they are actually, everyone in the band comes up with his own background, but it's somewhere between classical and metal backgrounds. For the lyrics it depends on who wrote them, for example Ahmed Zine, it's about engagement and commitment, Yusra's lyrics are more personal stories inspired by nature, fantasy and people.

**Why did you pick metal after all? From your perspective, why does it have such a fascination for you that you decided to play it and to form a band?**

it's all about power J

**How did your cultural environment respond to your band in the early days and how has this changed over the years?**

Analgesia has always been accepted and loved by people, the number has changed a lot lately thanks to new compositions, but from the first show up on stage and the first album Analgesia got many greetings from Moroccan people, and worldwide then.

**What would be the status of metal in Morocco be generally? Can you write a bit about the development of their music scene as well?**

It of course has been developed with the new technology people become to know more about this music, for this last decade many concerts, festival about rock-metal music were given in Morocco ( Paradise Lost, Napalm Death ... ) for instance are good examples of great bands that have played in Morocco.

**Do metal and non-metal bands/artists collaborate? Is there a mutual exchange of ideas and feedback between them? What about ties to other countries of the Maghreb?**

Yes, the members of the band do not only play with Analgesia and this musical style specifically, the drummer plays in different projects (metal bands), the guitarist is a music composer and composed for many known musicians in Morocco and abroad in different styles, the vocalist sings with the philharmonic orchestra, and gives many recitals, also sings in featuring with known artists.

**Can you write a bit about your (main) releases [style of music, how long it took you to get it done, background/topics of it ... etc.]:**

Return to the Self (2006)

From September 2005, and even before, some songs were ready before, they just needed more work.

Era of the Storytellers (2009)

from June 2007 till August 2009

Beyond Illusion (2011)

2 years, some songs were composed in 2009, but could not be recorded due to the technical difficulties. And for to record the orchestral parts of some songs, the choir took many mouths as well (it's not easy to combine nearly hundred voices in a same album J

**How do you distribute your music? Do you print copies yourself and spread them locally, or are/were you able to collaborate with labels outside of Morocco?**

Era of the storytellers was out on September the 7th of 2009, the same day all copies were sold. Some few days before beyond illusion would be out the band announced that it prefers to share it with people through internet with a link to download it legally. All the songs, singles, EP, and albums are produced by the same company which collaborate with the band from it's beginning, it's the A.S.P production in which the song writer, music composer of the band is a member.

**Do you have venues in the big cities in which metal is sold on a certain scale? What about metal festivals and concerts, do they offer such sales?**

we actually have, still have so many proposition to play in big gigs, and metal festival, we lately been invited to play in Tokyo, Madrid, California, Paris, Dubai and so many big cities. However the members are cannot respond to all of these events due to the personal schedule.

**As you have had played live already, even on festivals, why don't you write a bit about these experiences.**

A great one, no matter how big of small is the festival or the concert, how many people are their, as far as I am concerned being on stage and singing analgesia's songs is the most beautiful experience I've ever had. I remember a concert we gave, we came on stage and stated asking people which song they would like as to play, and we played the concert responding to their demands, that was amazing!

**How often do concerts take place in the cities and what kind of music is offered there?**

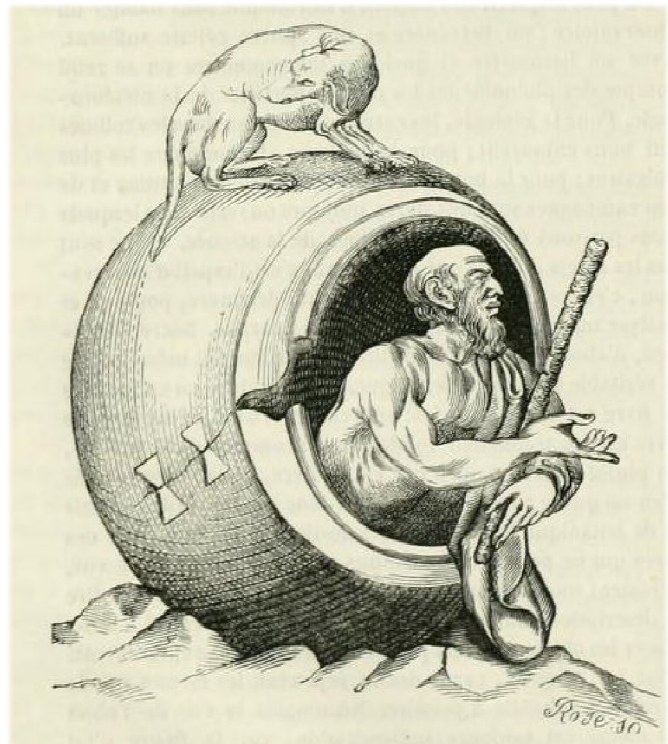
Events in morocco are so very often, and Analgesia could give a tour in the biggest cities witch would take more than 1 month, but as I told you it's very hard to deal with every member's schedule.

**Do you have some forthcoming releases? What are the plans for the future?**

lately 2 singles were out Fallen Beauty and Tell Me in the same month, in so different kind the first it more neo-afro-orchestral and the second is a gothic ballad. Some singles are coming very soon, J why not a fourth album?!

**In case someone is interested in your music, how and where can this person buy your stuff?**

We are so close to our fans, all you have to do is ask. You can send an e-mail to [analgesia.contact@gmail.com](mailto:analgesia.contact@gmail.com) or through the fan-page facebook of the band ANALGESIA then we will greet all your wishes J





## *Reviews*

### **Hesper Payne / Sabazius split**

<http://loathso.me/>

A curious release with two bands, whose conceptual differences are, at least on this output, rather slim. Each of the compositions – yes, there are only one per participant – has nearly the same length, follows a similar metal approach – doom metal in this respect – and even in terms of the conceptual background both of them like to trod on the same path. Each has their own identity but there is nevertheless a proximity that leaves a slightly bitter taste and confusion.

### **Hesper Payne – The Deathless Dreamers Will (32:09)**

(UK; Doom / Death Metal)

<http://hesperpayne.com/>

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The first of the two would be Hesper Payne, a band that hails from Newcastle upon Thyme. Having been founded in 2004 and a good amount of releases out already, it can at least be suspected to discover some kind of developed framework in which this latest instalment fits somehow.

A striking aspect is the general melancholy in the music, which finds expression through the use of a mellowing guitar, a meandering through realms of minimalism and some rare aggressive counterpoints, while all progresses with a somewhat sedative, calm but also appropriate dynamic. There is no hectic in here and the overall dark atmosphere is able to unfold itself.

Dissonance or noise elements are not allowed to appear, which is a sad thing, because these would add a certain kind of insanity to the performance; something that is commonly associated with the stories of Lovecraft. Harmony, (at times) vague melodies and a certain setting in terms of the sound follow a rather conservative approach, which seems to be the general idea when it comes to Lovecraft and his works. There is nothing overtly innovative, disturbing, intense or confusing here. The same can also be said of the concept itself. Guitars, clean vocals, solid drumming, well balanced production ... everything is appears in such a way as can be expected. Doom stretched a bit for too long and with some additional amount of heaviness – compared with the standard set of the genre – can be found here.

Whether the performance is good or bad might depend on personal preferences, but it all feels a bit too thin and hollow.



## **Sabazius – The Madness from the Sea (32:25)**

(UK; Doom Metal)

<http://sabaziusdoom.wordpress.com/>

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Another band ... and more of the same. Sabazius deliver what they have always done: extensive composition/s, generally slow progression in terms of the riffs, often distorted vocals, a good amount of repetition and samples. These had been the basic elements on the preceding albums and they make an appearance here as well.

At times, the vocals remind on 'Death's Eternal Sleep' from the band's debut album, which is kind of odd in case you are familiar with the band's outputs. Once they appear in this fashion also the guitar show a similarity, which increases the amount of confusion even more. Why does the band have to return to something they did already? Is this all they can offer in terms of Cthulhu? (Both tracks deal with the same issue)

Sabazius' metal parts are interrupted or accompanied by piano segments, whose minimalist and repetitive play create a nice counterpoint to the riffs. A point brought up in terms of Hesper Payne would be true in this respect as well: the insanity or extreme nature of the topic can hardly be felt in this long composition. Some voice manipulation can be found, but other elements like noise samples or disturbing effects are equally non-existent.

While those unfamiliar with the music of Sabazius might find the performance appealing and interesting, the other fraction might be irritated by the re-appearance of older ideas.

### On the design:

The CD comes with a cardboard-like hull with two inserts; one for the CD and one for the booklet. I have damaged mine already by simply trying to move the rather large piece of folded paper back into its proper place. Also the CD cannot be removed easily. Something handmade is always nice to have, but some more space for removing and replacing the stuff would have been nice indeed.

### To sum it all up:

I am not impressed. Generally, the music drags on for far too long and is not of a kind that leaves the listener motivated to take a second spin.

### Note:

100 copies, handmade and with a A4 poster.

## **Busukyangbernanah – 3.01 (2012)**

(Indonesia; Noise, Minimalist, Experimental)

15 Tracks (3 x 1CDr – Turbinicarpus) - \_ - \_ - (45:00)

<http://www.turbinicarpus.net.ua/>, <https://www.myspace.com/busukyangbernanah>

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In some respect it would be fair to state that the composition is by no means conclusive. The general absence of a consistent musical conception, the overall variation or rather emphasis on experimentation, is not reflected through the actual design of the release. As outlined in the description above, '3.01' can only be acquired in a version of three CDs, each with the same content but with a different cover; 3, 0, 1. The idea behind it being that music is not only to be parcelled through the means of experience and expression but also in the sense of an artefact, which can be distributed freely and without any infringement of the copyright or some other kind of limitation.

In its own merits this is a nice idea with a certain emphasis of encouraging the idea of sharing music and overcoming the hoarding of releases for the mere purpose of doing so. Yet, the actual way in which this had been executed is not satisfying. Unlike some disks that require two players for the listener in order to experience it in its fullest, such is not the case here, due to the emphasis summed up above. What happens with the art once this 'passing over' from one person to another has/d been established? Is there a chance to see this process happen another time ... and another ... and another? It can be doubted. It would have been more interesting to see each CD with a different or a variation of the 'overall' content, in order to encourage the exchange of the artefacts and to overcome



the aspect of collecting them. Maybe a flash drive, which would reveal a different content with each access would be interesting as well.

Aside from the rather peculiar design of the release, the music itself is also anything but normal. Fifteen times three minutes, exactly (!) three minutes, are offered here and it is strange how the listener is thrown to and fro between a variety of sound concepts and without much time to grasp or even to understand them. Each of the compositions presents a new take on the noise genre. Often minimalist and consisting of only one texture, then aggressive; occasionally hypnotic, rarely pleasant and in some respect surprisingly conservative. Busukyangbernanah – no idea on how to pronounce this properly – present a small glimpse on the conceptual richness of the noise genre. All of the compositions are actually too short to fascinate in a long run, but might give those a first impression, whose ordinary focus tends to be of a more normal kind. Three minutes are not much when it comes to properly elaborate the motives and arrangement, but it is possible to shed light on the sounds, the atmospheres and in some respect also the peculiarities of the noise universe.



Buy this release and share it with friends. Open to them this strange realm a lot of bands tend to wander in these days and spark their interest in this genre. This CD wants ... waits to be spread ... distributed... thrown among the people.

Note:

Limited to 15 copies.

### **La Rainbow Toy Orchestra – Family Album (2008)**

(Spain; Experimental, Noise)

9 Tracks (MP3 – Netlabel: Error Lo-Fi Recordings) - \_ \_ - (12:23)

[http://freemusicarchive.org/music/La\\_Rainbow\\_Toy\\_Orchestra/Family\\_Album/](http://freemusicarchive.org/music/La_Rainbow_Toy_Orchestra/Family_Album/),

<http://error-lofi.com/wordpress/?p=345>

Children's toys and an accordion create together a strange experience. Weird noises, confusing rhythmic arrangements, odd combination of sounds and the bubbling up of memories from one's own childhood are what make this release an interesting experience. Despite a general lack in length, none of the tracks is longer than two minutes, the ongoing battles of attention that takes place between each of the elements are what makes 'Family Album' worth to give it a try. In some respect it is a fulfilment of something children are generally not able to do: the full launch of their toys and equipment in one gigantic (dys-)harmonic orchestra. What the parents never wanted to see unleashed – a pandemonium which might close to what Lovecraft had written about – becomes flesh in this respect and can therefore be described as a late satisfaction.

Yet, the performance is not too convincing, because everything is somewhat too nice and gentle. There are too few contrasts and the chaos kept a bit too limited or rather controlled. A bit more daring, a bit more of the childishness would have had a wondrous effect on the music. Nevertheless, one cannot help but be amused about the strange arrangements expressed in this small/short piece of art.

Note:

can be downloaded for free from both links above.

### **Skinfather – ἄθεος (2012)**

(USA; Death Metal, Hardcore)

5 Tracks (??? – Self-released) -\_-\_- (13:36)

<http://www.facebook.com/skinfatherofficial>, <http://skinfather.bandcamp.com/>

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ἄθεος (atheos) – 'without gods' in English – would be the debut release of the American band Skinfather; whose band name I do not really get, but that is only a minor issue. The title of the release is pretentious of course, because the band uses English lyrics while no cursing in some obscure ancient Greek can be found. So much for consistency or expectations.

An aspect that strikes the listener as important is the overall intensity and the tendency of the band to create an uniform atmosphere; some tracks even lead over to next one and with no gap in sight, as if it had been a one session/take in which it all has been recorded. There are a lot of hardcore influences and they shine through in the overall conceptual approach of the music: the breaks, the dynamics and the tempo. The riffs are actually quite nice but some additional solos would have been a welcome diversion; only the title track would have one.

Skinfather play heavy and powerful death metal / hardcore, which can be enjoyed quite easily. At times there are too many vocals and too few counterpoints in the concept. Fans of a rather intense mixture of these two genres might want to give this band/release a try.

### **Silent Path – Mourner Portraits (2012)**

(Iran; Depressive Black Metal)

9 Tracks (CD – Hypnotic Dirge Records) -\_-\_- (53:45)

<http://ekoveefrits.com/silentpath.htm>, <http://www.hypnoticdirgerecords.com/>

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Release titles are a strange thing indeed. Take this one for instance: 'Mourner Portraits'. From the first glance one would expect some kind of presentation of various types of grieving. Even though it all touches on a subject all cultures have to deal with in one way or another, it is sad to see how shallow this topic is actually presented on this album. Yet, I am misleading you, the reader, because what the band actually wanted to express is the following (taken from an e-mail, which I received from the band):

*[...]the entire Silent Path's mourner portraits is about war and all its negative effects over the world so world war II and specially Hitler is the boldest focal point in the album[...]*

Well, a daring attempt one would say. War is a curious thing and has been a part of the history of man for quite a while, but to reduce war to the aspect of the darker emotions, to bemoan all its ill effects, all the tragedies, the death and destruction would leave out a lot of other aspects: the cheering over victories, the endless parades, the music, the propaganda etc. Like everything, it is a complex and confusing matter with a lot of contrasts as well as disturbing shades. Chris Hedges, to name one example, not too long ago has written a book with the title "War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning" and this clearly indicates the complexity of this topic and how deep it cuts into our/the social fabric. Or take 'Barbara W. Tuchman's 'The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam or even good ol' Homer and his Iliad.

Yet Silent Path stick to the Hippie approach that all is bad and this can be felt throughout the entire release. A mixture between depressive black metal and funeral doom are the basis for the music, while additional samples create some short disturbances. Furthermore, noise plays a minor role as well, but in terms of the overall impact it can actually be neglected. The tempo follows the all too common genre concept, with its emphasis on a slow pace, a good amount of repetition, the all too typical vocals, and reverb and also the production delivers what fans of this kind of music want to hear.

It is impossible to grasp something of the content of the lyrics, it is also impossible to put the samples into perspective. What should be made of them? Without a booklet one is left – like me, who has received nothing but some MP3s – in the dark and without much to go with. From the mere act of listening one is unable to grasp their actual content. Due to the confusion on how to properly understand the title, it may be best to consult them in order to get the full experience of the album.

Mourner Portraits is listenable but it lacks some conclusive elements that would put everything in a proper framework. Therefore, while the music has its moments, offers some nice melodies and such, looking at it from a broader perspective leaves a bit of disappointment. How the aspects of war play out, how the suffering is expressed, remains hidden and blurred; outside of the reach of the listener. The debut album of the Iranian band does not move, does not dare to grab the listener and the emotions are kept silent and apathetic. It all remains hollow and gentle, without any hints on the horrors of the great wars. Not a disaster, but far from good.

Note:

CD comes with a 16 page booklet, which has the lyrics in it.

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### **Loudrage – Pungent Roots (2011)**

(Romania; Death / Groove Metal)

3 Tracks (MP3 – Self-released) - \_ \_ - (11:55)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Loudrage-Groovy-Death-Metal/178914798804944>

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The 2011 release "Pungent Roots", the version this review is about, was actually meant to be re-released as an EP. Should someone stumble over versions of this songs, then it should be noted that this are not the final ones, so to speak. Furthermore, the EP never saw the light of day and therefore also not the supposed new variants of the compositions. Instead, all of them will appear on the full-length "Bloody Grooves", which will/might/should hit the Earth in 2012.

Actually, those three 'demo versions' are not bad, but may come over as a bit raw and unpolished. Maybe 'Loudrage' wants to see the music with a more powerful production, which would have a larger emphasis on the bass for instance. 'Doomed' the opening track gives a wrong impression in some respect, because the influences from 'Bolt Thrower' do not appear in the later compositions. In some respect it is strange to experience the progression of the album: 'Fear Me' comes with a surprisingly groovy and strange pace, while the 'Suffo-Kate' lacks the dynamics of the opener as well and presents to the listener some kind of death metal with a lot of breaks. Tons of vocals express tons of lyrics, while the instruments are hardly allowed to add some solos to the music; for instance, one might suspect such an element in the last track.

Considering that the tracks are not present in their 'final' version, they are still quite listenable and interesting. The forthcoming debut album will be able to shed some more light on the potential of the band.

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### **Telegraphy – Someone in Detroit (2012)**

(USA; Ambient, Experimental)

1 Track (MP3 – Netlabel: Ionosound Recordings) - \_ \_ - (43:51)

<http://ionosonderec.blogspot.com/>

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It is a track to drift away, to leave the normal shores behind, to take a dive into a different place, to let the thoughts wander away, to experience a surreal atmosphere, to get haunted by some repetitive hypnotic rhythms, to listen to music from a post-industrial area.

It is just one long track; a bloody piece of forty fucking minutes. It drags on for a while, seems like to last forever. It has a vibe of an endless buzzing of bees and other swarming insects – sounds and fragments that are unknown and incomprehensible. Life in a town that has seen the best of its days in the past and which is left behind by the electronic beeps – similar to those in this compositions – incomprehensible – intelligible.

Who is this someone? Is it you Michael?

What would this someone see?

Why do I feel that the music is mocking the reality?

Where can art thrive if no audience is left to experience it?

Telegraphy poses questions with 'Someone in Detroit'. It is a strange combination of desolation and post-modern proximity. The de-industrialized vast reality and the closeness of the global village. Should we be sympathetic? Should we try to imagine the vague melodies and their connection to the life in Detroit? Judging from the warmth in the motives, it does not seem to be that bleak in this city after all. Melancholic elements might shine through now and then, but the overall positive vibe will most certainly be able to compensate this.

Headphones and twilight are recommended.

Note:

Can be downloaded for free from the link given above.

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**Auaesuve – Displaced and Uncharted (2010)**

(USA; Funeral Doom)

4 Tracks (CDr – Gris Records) - \_ \_ \_ (60:59)

<http://www.myspace.com/auaesuve>

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Maybe this review comes a bit late. Maybe it would have been more appropriate to present it along with the interview, which appeared in the 16th edition of my magazine. Maybe. 'Displaced and Uncharted' would be the debut album of the American, who would be the head behind this project. It took a couple of previous outputs until the band had been ready for a big jump. This then contains four long tracks in a dense atmospheric funeral doom fashion and with it Auaesuve continues the path they have walked on for quite some time. As can be seen from the length of the release, which is given above, it is by no means short and the compositions range from 11:24 to 19:51. What might strike the listener as bewildering is the actual development of the music the more it progresses and this requires some explanation.

It needs to be stressed that the emphasis on the melodies and the charming sweets atmosphere of the opener 'Sprouting Resplendent Wings' is by no means representative for other three compositions. Even though the basic setting remains the same in some respect, it all changes and evolves over time. It becomes ever unpleasant and more bewildering. The harmony begins to break down, fragment, dissolve; something quite apparent in the last composition, which is not only strange due to the overall lack in the vocals. The emphasis on a mixture between noise and ambient, with some kind of distance towards the listener and less ear-friendly in style, unravels something that could not have been anticipated in the first minutes of this CD. Instead of leading the person along the path, it is rather unwilling in this respect and maybe even tries to ignore him or her altogether.

Actually, Auaesuve never offers music that is too pleasant or rather too cheering to begin with. A few minutes into the opener reveal the basic concept of the band: a dense layer in the background with various types of vocals on top of it – to simplify a bit. In terms of the latter aspect the American musician behind this project switches between deep (distorted?) growls and black metal screams. Which of these can be experienced depends on the track, because the band tries to keep the overall approach rather minimalist and without much of playing around; something that resulted in a limitation and scale. Some slight variation in tempo are allowed to pop-up now and



then, but from a broader perspective their amount can generally be neglected. They help to break the monotony a bit; like the one drum pattern in the opener for instance.

What makes the music interesting is the bombast or rather the intensity in the concept. Whether it is the opener or the last composition all breathe this vibe of sheer energy that lies hidden somewhere but prevented from breaking out at a moment's notice. This has to do with the guitars and their impact. Unlike bands similar to Nortt for instance, the American one put the emphasis on the metal part, while influences from the ambient and noise genre are merely allowed to accompany them than to create some sort of dominance. The strings are nearly omnipresent, while the keyboards are reduced to an element in the background.

Remembrance meets Sabazius meets Sunn O))) might give an impression of what to expect on this album. Contrary to what other funeral doom metal bands tend to play, the American one adds a good amount of layers and drone elements into their concept. Maybe the band can be described as a heavy and better thought through version of 'Until Death Overtakes Me'. Those four compositions are an intense trip and present the music of this genre in an interesting approach. More or rather clearer counterpoints would have been nice, but maybe the next release will have this on a larger degree.

Note:

Limited to 150 copies and can also be downloaded for free from:

<http://archive.org/details/Auaesuve-DisplacedAndUncharted>

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**Foreskin – Anger Management (2012)**

(Pakistan; Thrash Metal, Crossover)

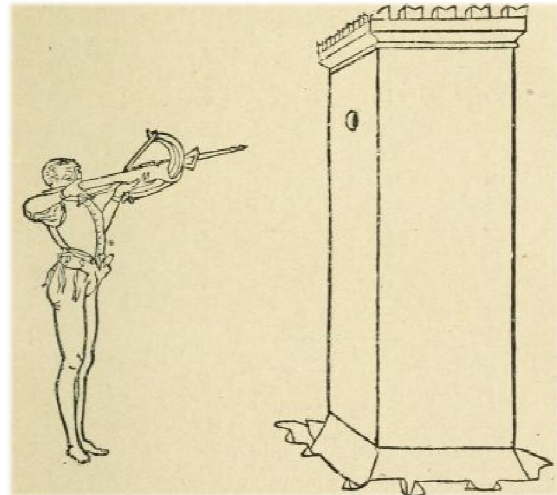
2 Tracks (MP3 – Self-released) - \_ \_ - (7:06)

<http://www.facebook.com/foreskinband>,

<http://foreskin.bandcamp.com/>

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Another short release by the Pakistani metal band 'Foreskin'. Two tracks with a total length of roughly seven minutes follow in some respect the style of the previous recordings, which does not differ much from them in this respect. Well, one should be glad that the persons behind this project have at least decided to move away from grindcore-esque approached and have started to write some longer compositions instead.



And these are actually quite good indeed; despite the general differences in the concept and style. While 'Hack N' Slash... The Dungeon' comes with a variety of tempi, the succeeding title track is more straight lined in this respect and more in a punk/thrash kind of way. The emphasis is rather on the instruments, while the lyrics seem give the impression of being there to fill some space instead of delivering a message; this is especially true for the opener. In this an interesting combination of elements appears, because due to the punkish nature of the second composition it could be imagined with a larger amount and variation of the vocals. Well, the samples from the movie 'Pulp Fiction' are able to compensate the flaw somehow.

It is an entertaining release by the Pakistani band, but most certainly nothing more. They should spread more tracks on less releases and not throw these in tiny bits unto the masses.



### **Ars Praesagus – Inhale Satan (2007)**

(Finland; Black / Death Metal)

3 Tracks (CDr – Self-released) -\_-\_- (16:18)

<http://www.myspace.com/arspraesagus>

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Yes, me lads, the time has come to bring Satanic worshipping to a new level. No more of these tiring recitations, candle orgies, goat sacrifices, endless deflowering of virgins, countless hours spend on mastering intelligible as well as often faked ritual texts and let us not forget all the money that is necessary to acquire the stream of unholy or supposedly sacred artefacts. Now, the time has come to give us a good inhale of Satan: a chance to suck in the essence of our evil master and to let the evil spirit flow through the blood veins; it is therefore mandatory to avoid cutting and self-mutilation, because it would only result in a lessen of the diabolic presence.

Sadly, 'Ars Praesagus', now shortened to 'Ars', debut demo does not offer any deeper insights into the realm of satanic evaporation. Maybe a grindcore band would have elaborated this topic to a certain degree, but this Finnish black/death metal band falls back to the all too common bickering about who can bring the lyrical expressiveness to a new level; 'I Cum on Your Christ'. At least the aspect of 'ownership' has been made clear quite explicitly.

In terms of the music the band presents a variety of approaches on their first ep. Each of the three songs differ in some respect, despite the general idea behind the music. While the opener follows more or less the standard conservative black / death approach, the second track 'I Cum on Your Christ' has two kinds of vocals and also the dynamics are a bit different; a bit punkish at times. Ignis Dominus on the other hand has some surprisingly mechanical and therefore sterile elements in it.

The tempo switches between aggressive and calm as well as slow moments. 'Ars Praesagus' present a good amount of variation in their concept, which, despite a slight shallowness and predictability in their approach, makes the debut ep an interesting listening experience. And even though the songs tend to drag on for a bit too long, the intensity is able to compensate this a bit.

#### Note:

Limited to 100 copies.

### **Equipo Humano Uno – Nemad Mufor (2012)**

(Spain; Experimental, Noise, Field recordings, Ambient)

2 Tracks (Tape – Poprebop) -\_-\_- (24:17)

<http://www.poprebop.net/006/>

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Juxtapositions of absurdities – this is what comes to my mind. A juxtapositions of various sounds, noises, samples, manipulation and whatnot. The consistency lies in its inconsistency; the predictability in its general lack of it.



Imagine a future world in which countless radio channels fill the airwaves and you have the ability to switch through them. Now something aggressive and noisy, then an odd field recording, then vague melodies, strange sounds from a (supposed) machine – whose purpose remains unknown – and then a home recording of some sort. The elements or rather the fragments never become definite. They are stuck on an abstract and vague level, without any chance to penetrate the border to (or of) the real world.

A different perspective would have to do with the general lack of being able to concentrate on a certain task for too long and the desire to switch to a different one once such is possible. Sometimes the interesting is sparked for a longer period of time, then it breaks

down after a couple of seconds; it is the oversaturation with impressions and impulses, the subliminal impulse to progress and to discover something new that can be seen in the two tracks of the Spanish band.

What is interesting though, is the general aspect of control or calmness with which the segments change. Abrupt changes, maybe through some emotion or fit, cannot be discovered on this release. Everything is sedated ... inconclusive in its desires but definitely not acting out of some sort of affection. And this leaves a stain on the concept, because this is not how we generally are. There are always preferences and tendencies to prefer something over another and even though this can most certainly be discovered here, the other side, the more darker and sinister one, remains hidden, artificially removed.

As can be imagined from these paragraphs above 'Nemad Mufor' is a strange experience. It seems rather to be music, whose sole intention might be to confuse the listener instead of giving this person a pleasant time. A trip ... an experience ... and a strange one at that.

Note:

Limited to 50 copies

**Apophallation / Nxfxtxex "True Stereo Split" (uncut business-card CDR)**

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(???, Denmark; Harsh Noise)

2 Tracks (Shit music for Shit People) -\_- - (6:20)

<http://shitcore.dk/smfsp/>

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According to the label:

One artist per channel, harsh noise. 5 copies made.

The actual tracklist:

1. Left: Apophallation "Destroying Peter Redmond Part 1" – Right: Nxfxtxex "My Uploads Keep Stalling"

2. Left: Nxfxtxex "Argh, Dead link" – Right: Apophallation "Destroying Peter Redmond Part 2"

Even though it is a neat idea and an experiment that might occur on only some obscure release, spread among artists and connoisseurs of strange performances, while the masses of the people remain stuck in their "self-inflicted (mental) limitation", it is by no means conclusive. In fact, to have a noise bands play on each of the channels is actually odd, because this robs the experience a bit of its fascination. A more daring attempt would have been some kind of cheesy pop band on one left channel and harsh noise on the right one. Something in vain of 'Rebecca Black' is bombarded with 'Whitehouse'. A folk band by an industrial one. Ambience for relaxation by a harsh noise wall. It is the fascination of contrasts, the idea of extreme differences between the two bands, which makes listening to such an album special.

Furthermore, even more daring would be a constant switch of the channels. Bands flip from left to right and back again. Total confusion. Total chaos. Even harmonic structures become incomprehensible.

'True Stereo Split' is a nice attempt ... but certainly nothing more.

Note:

Sold out.





### **Ghostandthesong – Escapes (2012)**

(Germany; Experimental)

3 Tracks (MP3 – Netlabel: BadPanda) - \_ \_ - (12:32)

<https://www.facebook.com/ghostandthesong>, <https://badpandarecords.wordpress.com/>

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Escapes, escapes, escapes, escapes, escapes, escapes, escapes ... the cover looks like this one word would be repeated endlessly (from top to bottom) and is only cut short through the artificial limitation in the size of the picture. The band name had been smuggled in between the various coloured version of the title, as if they wanted to make sure to appear in this (endless) list as well. An apology for not standing alone and taking a position; a bit ducked one might say.

Ghostandthesong are unable to leave the composition and everything flows in each other somehow. They escape their language and use French instead. It should not surprise to see them evading a too strict set of music, something that would limit them in their quest. A flight away from the realm of ordinary music. With two compositions the band breaks loose, while in the last one everything becomes so utterly confusing that the listener will attempt the same.

It is not frightening ... or is it?

The Germans (?) – the band is from Berlin, so let us assume this for a moment – play music ... in a variety of ways ... and to some level quite bewildering. It is like shuffling through a vast music collection and with the program set to create a smooth transition from one track to the other. While it is pleasant to listen to at some point, another one might take the listener by surprise. The opener has some surprising techno vibes, the second and best (or at least most easily accessible) composition comes with a mixture between pop, rock, electronic and such, while the last track is a bastard of eight minutes, has excessive recitation of French texts and in terms of the music a gentle melody with electronic elements, field recordings and so on.

Escape but where to ...? The release does not provide any answer in this respect. Or is it only accessible to those, who would be familiar with French?

Nevertheless, the video for the second track is really great and so is the composition. This alone should be enough to give this output a try:

<https://badpandarecords.wordpress.com/2012/03/26/badpanda120/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmA-uXu5Vhg>

### **Atrum Tempestas – Ne Deus crede (2012)**

(Finland; Black Metal)

5 Tracks (CD – Self-released) - \_ \_ - (21:56)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Atrum-Tempestas/157661770911078>

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Good ol' Nietzsche is allowed to open this release and this is something that does not happen on a regular basis. Well, it is not him in person, but some of his phrases are allowed to appear now and then over the course of the CD. What makes them interesting is the explicit way in which they add an Anti-Christian element to the music. How many examples can be brought forth of something that would stand up to: "one should never forgive Christianity". It is somewhat funny how few elements from the literature flow around in the black metal scene; not only today but in general. Go figure!

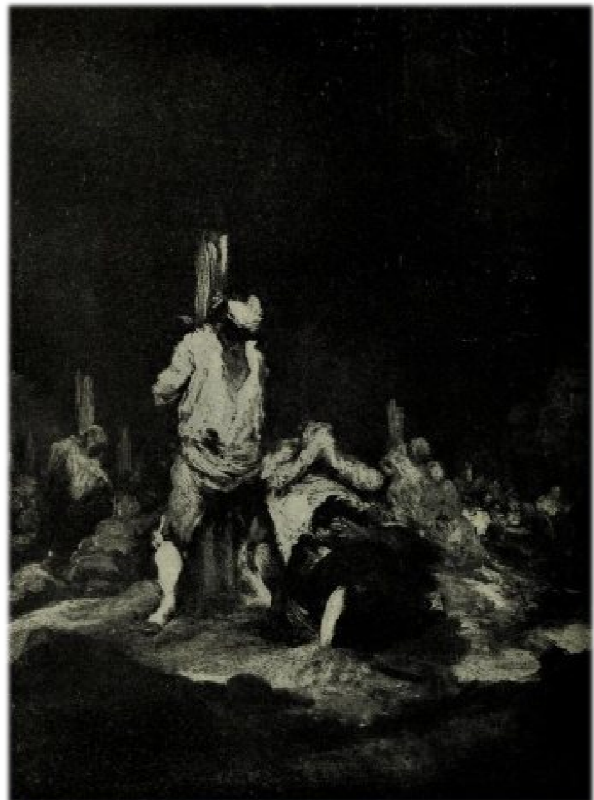
What about the music? It is nothing spectacular but offers a mixture between old-school and depressive black metal inspired elements. Generally, all is of a rather calm nature with not much aggressiveness or harshness that would break out of the flow of the music. There are some bursts and faster parts – Ecce corpus Jesu Christi – though, but from a broader perspective their total share can actually be neglected.

'Behexen' meets Sterbend (music) or the Canadian Niflheim. The French band Wolfshade can also be used as a reference. Atrum Tempestas' performance is not bad. What makes this release annoying in some respect is the level on which the listener has to endure the slower passages, which feel like they would drag on forever. It is the song-writing that is unconvincing in somehow. Nice elements here, interesting moments there ... but nothing that can be described as 'definite'.

Recorded in 2008, but only released very recently. It is not bad, it is not riddled with flaws, not suffering from an awful production, not loaded with cliché loaded lyrics and the like. A solid first step in the black metal realm for this band... and nothing more.

Note:

Limited to 20 hand-numbered copies.



**Afternoon Talk – Afternoon Talk ep (2012)**

(Indonesia; Folk, Pop)

5 Tracks (MP3 – Hujan! Records) - \_ \_ - (13:22)

<http://hujanrekords.com/releases/afternoon-talk-self-titled-ep>, <https://www.facebook.com/afternoontalk>

Indonesia has a considerable music scene and a short glance over the submissions to the Metal Archives reveals this easily. Metal fans are therefore in the somewhat (more) comfortable position and are easily able to discover some new bands/outputs, a new fix to the never quenchable thirst. When it comes to non-metal bands/album, then things get or rather are a bit trickier. A first barrier would be the language and a further one the general lack of e-mail addresses; to those few of us who refuse to join Facebook – these do often not appear on their web site. Now, at least a small hole in the barrier has been pinned:

<http://indonetlabelunion.tumblr.com/>

Well ... the name says it alright. Check it out ...

It would be nice to find something similar in other music scenes as well, but it needs dedication and initiative.

Afternoon Talk present a mixture between folk and pop, which in style is closely oriented on the Western concepts – something not too surprising, once the band pictures are taken into consideration. Be it the music, be it the language and the atmosphere, all points in this direction and gives a glimpse on how close certain kinds of music are interpreted around the world. From the mere sound alone it would be hard to make out a difference between 'Afternoon Talk' and a comparable band from Europe for instance. Whether this is good or bad shall be left open for discussion.

There is a certain kind of light-heartedness in the performance and it can be discovered in the way the lyrics are expressed; 'Love Letter' and 'So Far Away'. Moreover, to describe the music as overtly serious would be misleading as well. Some gentle, sweet compositions, with strange timing in the vocals – and too many lyrics now and then, which are sooo difficult to articulate – and a minimalism in the instruments that creates a somewhat charming atmosphere. For those, who are in a good mood/spirit and might want to listen to a performance outside of the ordinary and local musical realm.

Note:

Can be downloaded for free.

## Sea Oleena – Sea Oleena (2010)

(Canada; Pop/Folk, Ambient, Experimental)

7 Tracks (Tape – Bridgetown Records) - \_ \_ - (25:50)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sea-Oleena/169212813125077>

It had been the first track, the opener, that has/had sparked my interest. A bit of diving through the endless tides of the bandcamp universe and I made a short halt at this one. Such a nice mixture of drone, minimalism, ambient, repetition and somewhat ethereal folk can be found here. Easy to like ... easy to enjoy ... disgustingly catchy and obtruding. Hard to escape, once someone has dared to peek into this obscure realm. 'Sea Oleena' avoid the aspect of loftiness and circle around it in a somewhat infantile kind of way. Here an element, there a sound, now a drum, then a bit of noise. Playing as an imperative and without much of a serious afterthought.

'Little Army' might be the best example for her – it is a one-woman band plus some occasional help from this person's brother – way of creating and playing music. With over seven minutes in length, she has enough room to “mess things up” in such a way as to take the listener to a strange to and fro of sounds/impressions/variations.

Characteristic for the debut release is the evolution of ideas in the compositions. Layer follows layer, sound follows sound. It is like looking or rather examining a portrait of a well-known painter. Facet after facet reveals itself, the processes in the brain unfold magically, make everything clearer, presenting it all in a strange inexplicable order, impressions flow around, there is confusion, there is delight, there is the pleasure in experiencing it, in unravelling it. Here, music for the times of pleasure, for the moments in which the hormones turn ones head into a dizzy, maybe especially those in the spring and the summer.

All cheerful? A rose-coloured hell? By no means. Some slight melancholic or rather thoughtful moments have entered the debut as well and these appear, a short interval one might call it, once the first two compositions have passed by. To call them depressive would do them an injustice, but they take the whole concept back to a more “ground” level.



A few words about the instruments. Guitars and a piano play a vital role in the concept, while electronic beats appear on a low scale and only in several compositions. Despite the rather pop-ish nature of some compositions, other feel like ambient that has been received some additional folk elements. As such, the music is never too complex or avant-garde in the arrangements, but is rather fascinating due to the way it all had been merged together.

How to describe this release with a nonsensical reference? Tori Amos on acid meets Björk and teams up with some psychedelic folk/ambient band? Got it? Me neither, but it sounds good.

Autumn draws nearer and nearer ... and it seems this music does not fit entirely to this time of the year, but you should make certain to have it at close hand once the sunlight becomes more intense and the dark depressing days have gone by.

### Note:

Can be downloaded for free from:

<http://seaoleena.bandcamp.com/album/sea-oleena>

## Sea Oleena – Sleeplessness (2011)

(Canada; Pop, Folk, Dark Ambient)

7 Tracks (Tape – Bridgetown Records) - \_ \_ - (30:40)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sea-Oleena/169212813125077>

'Sleeplessness' would be the second release of 'Sea Oleena' and it is different from the debut. First impression: everything is more controlled, focussed, gentle. While the earlier presentation is rather like running through a flowerbed and sucking in all the various types of smells and impressions, this latest one feels much more sedated, sterile as well as distant. Yes, distant. It is like chatting with a woman via the video stream. You can see her, but not touch, smell or caress her. This chasm in between makes everything much less spontaneous and crazy. Thoughts do not bombard each other, unravel chaotic strange ideas ... their impetus loses its fascination the moment they have to pass through the electronic gateway. 'Sleeplessness' sounds like a melancholic nightly contemplating about the loss of the spontaneity of the first output.

Aside from this, all is darker, more melancholic, less able to enwrap the listener and take this person to a strange sweet place. No more samples that appear out of nowhere. No more strange build-ups in terms of the arrangements. Less of variation and contrasts in terms of the vocals. More order and control. A post-modern version of the debut?

It is trip hop that has taken up part of the folk elements and with the effect of an increase in sterility; something the first output definitely lacked on this scale; 'Sister' as well as 'Milk'. Tori Amos returns with a vengeance, has brought Rebecca (& and the Musicbox) with her and thought some folk would not hurt either. Ambient and noise are left in a state of rubble and hardly considered in terms of this album. 'Sleepless Fever' – nomen est omen in this respect – would be an exception and reminds the listener on the swiftness of some of the earlier compositions. Piano, guitar, (some slight and often minimalist) electronic beats and also field recordings are the dominant aspects on this recording. There is a subliminal mysticism in it all.

Somehow one should not sit astounded or bewildered at this kind of mixture. Sleeplessness is mostly a facet that is commonly associated with the night time, while those dreamy sleepy moments in the day fall under the table and are dismissed as a fancy of some sort; remember the imperative of work. The music is generally dark and personal. It is an introspection, a pondering about questions, impressions, ideas. There is no attempt of breaking out of it; for instance, I like to walk through the streets at night and take pictures with my camera. The last track 'Orion's Eyes' is more like a yearning to a faraway place, a mystical longing towards a region that escapes not only the human comprehension but works as also as a fetish for one's own desires. It is in some respect sad that the music fails to deliver a direction; remains on the spot, is unable to break out of the person that is suffering from insomnia.



Is this something we have to face alone? Can we not leave our shores in these times and take a dive into our outer world? Is sleeplessness not more of an imperative to search for the spirits of the night, the demons in the shadows and countless animals that reconquer the towns/cities in these dark hours? To remain stuck in twirling thoughts seems too much of a selfish and maybe even pathetic state of mind. Unlike the debut output, this latest instalment fits much better into the darker days that lie ahead of us.

### Note:

Can be downloaded for free from:

<http://seaoleena.bandcamp.com/album/sleeplessness>



## **Gravehuffer – Blasphemusic (2012)**

(USA; Thrash Metal/Crust/Grindcore)

20 Tracks (CD – Reality Impaired Records) -\_-\_- (52:11)

<https://www.facebook.com/gravehuffer>

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The debut album of the American band 'Gravehuffer' continues where the previous band 'Krom' had left off and those familiar with the releases of both projects will be able to identify the similarities. First of all, each of fourteen tracks from the latter band first and only output have been used for this latest instalment. These appear, according to the band (slightly) remastered on Blasphemusic. As some might know, Joplin had been hit by a tornado in 2011, which left parts of the town in rubble. Also the band member of Krom had been affected and all the merchandise had been lost. This first release by Gravehuffer is therefore also an attempt to present the music to the audience again and a step to recover from the tragic event.

To be more precise:

New tracks: 1-4 & 18+19

Old tracks: 6-17 & 20

It is a nice way to start this CD. A bit of a humorous take on the state the band is from and helps to set the mood in the right way for the rest to come: with a sample from the movie "The Outlaw Josey Wales" in which Grandma Sarah puts Missouri in its place by declaring that anything from there has a taint about it. In case someone was ever wondering about Reality Impaired Records, Freakflag and all the other countless bands/labels from Joplin, then this explains it all neatly, succinctly and most certainly in a definite kind of way.

Those who might be interested in some nostalgia can dig up the 4th edition of this magazine and read the review that had been written on the Krom output. What had been written back then still holds today, because most of the tracks on the debut of 'Gravehuffer' have seen the light of day before – on the debut output of the preceding band and this new project continues on this path.

There is this S.O.D./M.O.D. touch, which find expression through the lyrics, the samples and in some respect also in the music itself. Krom and now Gravehuffer are no bands, whose concept wanders around too much and meanders off into the realm of progressiveness or technicality. It is all rather kept on the spot, intense and with a certain amount of aggressiveness. With a mixture between thrash metal, crust and grindcore the American deliver a quite interesting mixture of facets, which stands pretty true to what one might have in terms of the expectations. The emphasis is on metal and not on crust or on grindcore. Elements from these genre have been woven into the music, but they remain on a small level. Amebix, Doom, Warcollapse might point in the right direction and elements from D.R.I. or Municipal Waste as well, but the problem with Gravehuffer is their lack of the speed commonly used in the thrash scene as well as the absence of structures of punk or crust or grindcore. It is a bit of everything ... with a good amount of humour. Music with a lot of groove and power as well as strange lyrics. Freakflag, another project of some of the band members, would be a sick sidekick, which does not have much to offer in terms of the lyrics, but has a similar attitude in terms on how to deal with topics and on how to present them; here though in doses of odd and confusing samples from various sources.

There are two cover version on this album and both are pretty sick. 'Commando' from 'The Ramones' does not come as a grindcore version, even though the first seconds might give the listener such an impression. Compared with the original though, this one is more sickish and has more power. The same can be said of Gravehuffer's interpretation of Celtic Frost's 'Into the Crypts of Rays'.

The output by Krom had been a lot of fun and was pretty enjoyable and the debut release of Gravehuffer takes it all a step further. With some additional compositions, well placed or chosen samples and an increase in aggressiveness they seem to be a path in the right direction; the new material works as a slight and more intense contrast to the older one. Music with a lot of punch can be experienced and enjoyed here, and the band never really leaves the listener much of a time to rest or catch some breathe.

### Note:

An interview with Krom can be found in the 16th edition of the magazine:

<http://archive.org/details/ADeadSpotOfLight...Number16>

### **Connate Exasperation – Crypts of Decay (2010)**

(Iran; Death Metal)

6 Tracks (CD – Self-released) - \_ \_ - (22:41)

<http://reverbnation.com/connateexasperation>, <http://www.myspace.com/connateexasperation>

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Somewhat interesting to hear the fascination for old-school death metal from an Iranian band. Morbid Angel is an obvious reference ... with all the shortcomings. Yes, unbelievable but true, there are indeed strange techno beats to be found in the music on 'Crypts of Decay', the debut output by this band. Luckily, this aspect is limited to the last composition, but it is a strange experience nonetheless. Is it really necessary to follow the American band on all of their endeavours? Will 'Connate Exasperation' next output be a disaster of equal proportions like 'Illud Divinum Insanus' had been for 'Morbid Angel'?

Generally speaking, 'Crypts of Decay' contains fast paced death metal, with a good touch of technical elements, driven by a drum-computer and some kind of deep growls. The band focuses on the tempo and refuses to deal with interludes, breaks and the like on a considerable scale. Instead, everything is kept tight and intense. A blast from the first second to the last. Luckily there is enough variation to prevent too much monotony from occurring. Actually, it would be too far-fetched to add term 'brutal' to the description of the music. What might come as a surprise somewhat is the lack of some longer and sick solo parts. In this respect the band limits itself to short bursts, whose part is not able to compensate this in any meaningful way.

Well, it is something not too innovative, rarely disturbing but generally intense piece of death metal from Iran. As the production is quite solid, it is easy to enjoy this piece of art. Fans of early Malevolent Creation, Morbid Angel, Cannibal Corpse or Monstrosity – to name some prominent examples – might want to give this release a try.

#### Note:

Limited to 150 copies.



### **Zix – The WarWhore (2012)**

(Lebanon; Heavy Metal)

6 Tracks (MP3/CD – Self-released) - \_ \_ - (25:01)

<http://www.facebook.com/Zixband>, <http://zixband.bandcamp.com/>

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Metal from Lebanon is a rare thing indeed. Metal from Lebanon with a female vocalist sounds like an impossibility. Yet here are Zix and this would be their debut ep. 'Maya Khairallah' would be the woman behind the microphone and she expresses the lyrics in a quite peculiar kind of way; more of that later. Like 'Blaakyum' also 'Zix' play heavy metal and do not head for the extreme realms of the metal genre; unlike Kaoteon or Ayat for instance. Another similarity with the aforementioned band would be the fact that the date of foundation is actually 1998(!) [see the Metal Archives entry], while the first release has only seen the light of day very recently. A convincing explanation on the lack of other outputs are not offered on any of the Internet sites but maybe the band members are able to explain themselves in an interview at some point somehow. Enough of the strange aspects? No ... because one of the musicians would be from Argentine(!), while the others are from Lebanon. Modern times, I guess.

And the music? Stunning! It may take a while to get used to the timing of the vocals, but once this aspect is longer of any importance, one has to acknowledge the quality of the performance of this Lebanese band. Catchy riffs, really cool solos, a really dense atmosphere and well crafted melodies. Compared with the 2012 output of 'Blaakyum', the music of 'Zix' has a larger focus on NWoBHM, has a considerable amount of drive and has a slightly sickish tone. 'Maya Khairallah' has a slight mocking tone in her voice, which adds to an occasional sarcasm in the lyrics just the right nuances to make it sound really good. What is strange in some respect is the tendency to rather speak the texts instead of singing them. Moreover, she does not reach for the falsetto region, but stops somehow on the path towards it.

I am bloody ignorant to some certain parts of the metal scene; especially when it comes to heavy metal and all the power metal stuff. If you have "experienced" one epic tale about a dragon slaying, you have heard 'em all -- Zix do not deal with this kind of stuff, though. There is also a certain lack in noisiness and a tendency to polish everything, which give me a hard time in enjoying it. Therefore, references are a tricky thing and as Youtube has blocked a good amount of videos for German Internet users – for reasons too complicated and stupid to explain here – it is difficult to do some proper independent research. Well, why not take the ones presented by the band on their Facebook site: Iron Maiden, Dio, Manowar, Virgin Steele, Warlord, WASP, Judas Priest, Saxon, most NWBHM bands.

The whole approach of 'Zix' has a conservative touch and does not try to be too modern. Similar to a lot of other bands in the Middle Eastern metal scene, cultural influences from this region play a marginal role and a native tongue is nowhere to be found. 'The WarWhore' is an album with compositions that can be enjoyed easily, but which could have used more of the sickness of the last track 'Shadows of a Dying Sun'. Even though the solo is rather slow, it nevertheless creates a strange focal point, but at a spot of the album at which it can hardly be expected. The contrasts between the voice of Maya and the instruments are rarely developed on a similar level over the course of the album; a glance over the lyrics reveals the approach of Zix without much difficulty.

This first ep is by no means bad or flawed – the production leaves the vocals a bit hollow at times though. Nevertheless the band has developed their own niche already: "female fronted heavy metal from Lebanon"; not many bands will be able to join them there soon. The music is catchy, slightly aggressive and quite melodic. To give nothing but a recommendation would be unfair.

Note:

The release is available as a free download at Bandcamp and as a CD; see their Facebook site for more information on the physical thingy.





### **Sources of the pictures:**

<http://archive.org/details/africatheeearth01recluft>  
<http://archive.org/details/alledewerckensoo00cats>  
<http://archive.org/details/diekunstdesradie00stru>  
<http://archive.org/details/etchingcraftguid00robirich>  
<http://archive.org/details/fiftyhithertounp00maypiala>  
[http://archive.org/details/gri\\_000r33125008476703](http://archive.org/details/gri_000r33125008476703)  
<http://archive.org/details/hommagemilez00slsn>  
<http://archive.org/details/lelivreillustrat00bouc>  
<http://archive.org/details/lepeintregraveur07delt>  
<http://archive.org/details/magasinpittoresq06char>  
<http://archive.org/details/modernillustrati00penn>  
<http://archive.org/details/mrpunchinbohemia00maypiala>  
<http://archive.org/details/paintingsdrawing00hisp>  
<http://archive.org/details/philmaysabcfifty00mayp>

## *Outlook*

Some longer reviews are in the making.

Some interviews are planned ... some had not been handed in for the 20th edition.

And such ...

as usual

